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FRENCH VIEWS

ON

ZOROASTRIANISM

TRANSLATED FROM THE TEXTS

OF

ADOLPHE FRANCK,

[illegible]ER OF THE INSTITUTE, PROFESSOR AT THE COLLEGE DE FRANCE,

AND

M. JULES OPPERT,

PROFESSOR AT THE BIBLIOTHEQUE IMPERIALE.

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FRENCH VIEWS

ON

ZOROASTRIANISM.

FRANCK.——OPPERT.

The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.—JOHN STUART MILL. *On Liberty*, ch. ii.

THE TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

THE following pages embody some of the most valuable fruits of modern thought on Zoroastrianism in a close and compact form. Though they are not exhaustive of the subject, they sufficiently indicate the spirit in which scholars of the West have endeavoured to work in the mines of Eastern faiths. They are a complete exponent of that critical method made use of by Europeans to read and interpret the mysteries of Asian religions. The general plan of the translator is to group together its results, especially such as have a bearing on Zoroastrian or Brahamanic scriptures, and to reproduce them in an English dress to the English-reading public of this Presidency, and chiefly to the Parsis and Hindoos. No doubt, a work of comparison, undertaken on a giant scale,

of native and foreign views on the subject will tend to the spread of correct opinions on some moot points of faith which now seem to overhang the whole religious horizon. Though too wide in its scope and title, the present work is intended only as an humble beginning towards the execution of the more extensive plan, and its fate will decide whether the issue of the rest of the series will one day be practicable or not. These views are not purely French, but they are French in so far as they have now been extracted from French materials.

It may be necessary to explain how far the translator has followed his present texts and the nature of the license he has been compelled to take with them. The first two chapters are rendered from M. Franck's *Etudes Orientales*, such extracts only being selected as relate directly to Zoroastrianism. The third or last chapter is almost a reprint of M. Oppert's article, which is a

distinct "extrait des Annales de Philosophie chretienne (cahier de janvier 1862)." The divisions of the book are adopted from the original. The sectional headings are the translator's own. The texts are rendered more literal than free, whereever it was permissible. In cases of proper names and Zend terms, the severe spellings of the original are religiously adhered to. In Biblical quotations, the authorized English version is consulted, in order to tally together the verbal discrepancies that are found between the French and the English texts. In passages from the Avesta, the translator has confined himself to the original French before him, instead of relying on Bleeke's or Haug's translations; for in several instances the argument seems to hinge no less on the meanings of terms than on the texts themselves. Mutilation, if it can be so called, has been resorted to in one case where the topic at issue has not been relevant to the translator's

thesis, and in others where repetition of what had been expressed before, interfered with the onward march of the argument. A brief summary of the Avesta doctrines appended in the original to the section here styled the "Age of Zoroaster," has been wholly left out; since it hardly starts any new grounds as respects the theory set forth in the chapter on the Persian idea of RIGHT. It is to be regretted however that such a rigorous mode of treatment should have excluded a few original remarks of M. Franck's, interspersed in the truncated passages.

Thus, it will be clear that on the whole the translator has simply acted the interpreter of his authors. All that he has aimed to reach is, firstly, the strictest possible fidelity to his texts, and, secondly, a whole and organic view, so far as it was practicable, of the opinions and reasonings couched therein. Such a course admits of no preference of one class of views to another class.

It is enough if they are broached by men of weight, or by scholars who are looked up to as authorities. The incidental advantage that accrues from it is, that the translator is relieved from the responsibility of either wholly accepting or wholly rejecting the statements of his authors. The views here offered are therefore not stereotyped or final. On the one hand the reader will meet with passages which do not fall in with the received doctrines of other scholars. On the other, cases will be found in which highly complimentary terms have been predicated of Zoroaster's belief. The translator, so far as he was able, has rendered a faithful account of both of these opposing views, without any commentary of his own. Both M. Oppert and M. Franck or rather the authorities he follows—as his materials are of a second-hand character,—have their own theories even on a few questions of facts. "Doctors disagree" even here, because Zend scholarship at the best is still

in the bud, and the defunct words are capable of every possible shade and variety of senses as the cuneiform ciphers themselves. Hence, be it said with all respect to the explorer of Assyrian inscriptions, that his verdict on Zoroastrianism,—viz. that it is a "dualistic pantheism"—is not likely to be endorsed by others, in spite of the philological tests he calls in for assistance. His reasonings, besides, seem to proceed from certain fundamental misconceptions and certain errors of history used as data. The whole chapter, so valuable for its scientific details, labours at proving a theory now almost fossilized, and which can only find its place in the lowest strata of opinions now deeply buried in the past. M. Franck, too, though he saves himself from this error falls into another one, viz. the confusion of Firdousi's with Greek genealogies of ancient Persia. So much it is necessary to explain in the outset, in order to avoid a possible misconception of the

translator's aims. The most redeeming feature, however, of the whole book, next to its method, is the comparisons that are drawn between Zoroaster's tenets and those of other philosophers. Is it not interesting to trace M. Oppert's line of thought as respects the analogies of Iranian doctrines and those of Greek philosophers, especially Heraclitus? The exposition of that philosopher's system in Grote's *Plato* affords perhaps the largest materials for carrying out these Zoroastrian and Heraclitean analogies yet further. Is it not, again, interesting to sift to the bottom the more decisive similarities drawn by M. Franck between Zoroaster's FEROUERS and Plato's IDEAS, not to say of the later Idealists and Sceptics of Persia? These problems open a new vista of interest to the historian of philosophy, and if the likenesses be proved to be as true as they are ingenious, they will serve as points of contact between the opposite currents of thought in the East and in the West.

The legend of Tristan among others is a typical case, which establishes or tends to establish an identity of conception prevailing among the ancient Armoricans, the Vedic Hindoos, and other mutually distant nations, in the mythic, or rather the legendary phase of the human mind. The instances faintly cited here by MM. Franck and Oppert may assert the same identity in its more matured or philosophic stage. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Truths, like every thing else, are not the property of a special religion. This is one of the inferences obtained by a comparative study of religions. The practical consequence of this inference is the growth of toleration in religious rites. But, to confine ourselves to the present treatise, the chief conviction it begets on the reader's mind is that of a kinship, if nothing more, between Zoroastrianism and Christianity or Judaism. Both of them, says M. Franck in his preface to the

Etudes, "teach of the creation, the unity of mankind, the fall of the first pair by the serpent's cunning, and the resurrection of the body." To judge which is the original creed and which the copy would require a scholarlike knowledge of the history and literature of both religions, and which in its present stage is so rudimentary, that the task may well be shelved off to posterity. Meanwhile, the translator hopes that the appearance of original works of a character similar to those now translated will at least serve to throw light on the surrounding questions as to how far religious belief may have been of separate and independent growth, or how far kindred or neighbouring nations may have acted and reacted on each other in the development of their spiritual life.

F. R. V.

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FRENCH VIEWS

ON

ZOROASTRIANISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE IDEA OF RIGHT AMONG THE ANCIENT PERSIANS.

§ I.

Introductory Remarks.

Hobbes and Pascal, materialism and fanaticism, conspire to maintain that Force is the only natural law of man, and that, given up to ourselves, we are condemned to remain ignorant of even the name of Justice and to have no discernment of good and evil. Since the 17th century this doctrine has found a large number of defenders, less however among the heirs of Hobbes'

philosophy than among those untractable theologians, incurable sceptics at heart, who found security of belief only in the absolute silence of reason and in the destruction of all moral sentiment. But all their sophisms are powerless against a truth as clear as the day: viz. that man as well as other creatures, man moral as well as physical, brings with him his laws, that is to say, the conditions of his existence, of his improvement and happiness, the idea or at least the sentiment of which is developed in him in proportion as he penetrates further into life, as he makes a more complete use of his faculties and as his affections and his intelligence assume a more marked control over his material instincts. These are the primitive laws, in so far as they are applied to our mutual relations with each other; these are the universal and invariable laws of society created with mankind, which constitute RIGHT properly so called: for outside of this circle, there is room only for custom and temporary institutions, more or less violent,—the work of circumstances or of force. Nor do I accept the distinc-

tion generally established between natural and positive right. As there is one truth, one reason, one conscience, so there is only one right, necessarily accepted in nature, even when nature is obscured to our sight, and requires extraordinary means to reveal itself. Written laws, if they be not its exterior consecration, together with a reflected sentiment of their origin and end, ought not to bear the same name. Right must not be confounded with jurisprudence.

Thus understood, Right does not solely exist in the reason of the philosopher and in the conscience of the good man: it manifests itself in different degrees, at one time under one, at another time under another, but perfectly recognisable form, in every effort of the human mind, in every act which serves as the interpreter of thought, in political institutions, civil laws, religious beliefs, and even in creations so capricious in appearance as those of poesy and art. Whatever be the pressure of external facts, whatever be even the abasement of its character or intelligence, the soul does not lose its divine impress: the sentiment of its

dignity and value, the idea and hope of justice, often wait, in order to shine forth, for the worst excesses of iniquity, and, commencing with the victims, extend gradually to the persecutors. So, in spite of the discredit into which these general studies have now fallen on account of the abuse made of them by men too fond of abstraction, nothing would be more interesting, instructive, consoling to humanity, even more religious than a history of Right, drawn not only from legislation and philosophy, but from all the collected monuments of human civilization. I have here proposed to myself a task less vast and more proportionate to my powers. I simply wish to show in what measure and under what forms right made its way among the earliest nations of the East; how it penetrated into the traditions, manners, dogmas, and the very institutions of those reputed to be stationary races, who seem to us made for slavery or barren contemplation; and how far, as regards certain rules of humanity, as self-denial, dignity of manners, and general devotion, the East has remained superior to Rome

and Greece, in other words to the most civilised people of the West.

In general, the ideas which may be regarded as the very source of Right and its most necessary conditions, the ideas *e. g.* of justice, humanity, reciprocal obligations, and moral dignity, are so far more distinct and unshaken in our minds, that we have a more perfect consciousness of our liberty, or that we more clearly perceive in ourselves the attributes of the human person and the character of a free and responsible being. In order to be convinced of this truth, until history imposes it on us as a fact, it suffices to think that Right has its necessary correlative in duty, and that duty can only exist for one person, that is to say, for a being who is self-dependent, who acts for himself, and is the responsible author of his own actions. If man is the master of his own acts, and recognises besides, in the name of duty and moral law, the ultimate end to which he ought to direct them, it is evident that he is dependent on no other being, and on none of his fellow-creatures, but on that end or that supreme law which governs his

own will, the will of every human creature and that of all intelligent beings. This is the origin of his right; this is the primitive and universal right which includes all others. Whenever man, on the contrary, disowns his liberty and renounces his own self-dependence he descends to the level of a thing, an instrument, and a means; he is the property of whoever can make use of him, and is more powerful than him either in cunning or in might.

This relation, so evident to reason, is also, as I have just said, a law of history which observation shows us as prevailing in every people; but it receives a peculiar expression among the orientals. The distinctive character of the East, the source from which flows its life and works, is that sublime ardour of soul and intelligence which nothing except the infinite can satisfy; it is that grandeur and liveliness of conception, or that spirit of synthesis, as philosopers call it, which, passing above the phenomena of nature, goes at first to search into the highest principle, the sole author, the eternal cause, the invisible source of

these fugitive existences; it is, in one word, the spirit of religion. Every thing in the East bears a sacred and religious character; every thing is there reputed to be of a supernatural or divine origin; every thing is there done in the name of God, and the idea which is conceived of Him is reflected in every act and thought. These are then the religious dogmas, the religious systems which ought to be consulted in the East, in order to know the tendency of its theory of man, and consequently that of his duties and rights. If God is conceived to be a free and intelligent being, a distinct principle of nature, the Author and Providence of the world, who joins with power, beauty, wisdom, and self-consciousness, then rest assured that man will be represented on the same model, that a task will be imposed on him corresponding to his faculties, and that in the name of that task, in the name of the faculties common to mankind, he will be taught to love and respect his fellow-creatures. If, on the contrary, God and matter are mixed with one another and confounded at this point, if God is only nature

itself, or the collective forms of nature adored in a single name, understood as a single being, always the same under the most diverse appearances, always One under the most multiplied forms; then the distinction is effaced between the physical and the moral worlds, spirit and matter, soul and body. Deprived of his free-will, his identity, his conscience, man fulfills the law of the lowest beings, and, even like the elements, eternally goes in a circle; whatever he does is necessary; he owes nothing either to others or to himself, since nothing can he do for them or for himself. This is actually what it comes to; but our mind is rarely so absolute. Between pantheism and monotheism, those two poles of human reason, history shows us intermediate points of view, more timid beliefs which relate now to the one, now to the other, extremity. All in all, they form an uninterrupted chain, to which there is a corresponding similar development in the knowledge and exercise of Right.

§ 2.

Analysis of the Doctrines of Zoroaster as regards Right.

Between Egypt and India we meet with Persia, which by the rank it occupies in history, by the nature and the elements of its civilisation, still more than by its geographical position, at once reconciles both, by outreaching them at least in the sphere of morality and of right. One mere fact is enough to convince us of the close relations and the intimate resemblances which originally existed between Persia and India; viz. the language in which the books of Zoroaster are written,—the ancient language of Iran, rediscovered by Burnouf's genius. Zend is only a derivation of Sanscrit, or rather Sanscrit itself somehow contracted in the mouth of a more masculine nation and amidst a nature ruder than that which gave it birth. Now, the unity of language necessarily presupposes the kinship, or at least the alliance of races, and

consequently that of ideas. Thus, for instance, the Indian principle of emanation has lost some of its unequivocal traces in the Persian dogmas. Though fallen from their rank and relegated to darkness, the *dévas* of Brahmanic worship are still easy to be recognised in the *dews*, that is to say, in the demons of the Zend-Avesta. They underwent the same degradation as the divinities of Paganism did in the theology of St. Augustin. In short, when we find in the religion of the Magi the principle of light and the principle of darkness called forth by turns to rule the universe for a period of three milleniums, it is impossible for us not to think of the alternatives of life and death, of organisation and dissolution, which are one of the most essential articles of Brahmanic faith. But how! in Persia, so close to Egypt, and several times conquered or visited by it, down to the time when it submitted in its turn to the arms of Cambyses, is there absolutely nothing in that country so admired for its piety and ancient wisdom? That were contrary to probabilities, especially when we read in Herodotus that the

Persians always adopted with facility the manners and the costumes of other nations; but I also think that it would be little in accordance with facts. We perceive, indeed, between Egyptian myths and the dogmas taught in the Zend-Avesta, resemblances which it is difficult to attribute to chance. Both have dualism for their basis, which has at once a metaphysical and moral character. Why should not Osiris and Typhon be the ancestors and even the models of Ormuzd and Ahriman? The two pairs are alike, not only in their contrary attributes, but in that superior principle from which they draw their origin. Ormuzd and Ahriman are the two sons of Time without bounds (Zervané Akéréné), and according to others, of infinite Space, as Osiris and Typhon were of Eternity and Immensity (Sev and Netpé). We find in both systems the dogma of the resurrection of the body joined to that of immortality. We can find in Mithra who is Ormuzd's minister on the earth and the guide of souls across the regions of heaven, a faithful imitation of Thot. Even the very bull Apis, we may be

compelled to recognise in the bull Goschouroun, which is itself too, the symbol of life. But all those foreign elements, borrowed from two such different sources, are found in Iran alone as undergoing a deep transformation and producing a truly original system which leaves, far beneath itself, the enervating pantheism of Brahmans and the obscure symbolism of Egyptian priests.

Persia had very ancient religious traditions; for, without going back to the fabulous dynasty of the prophets Mah-Abadians, of whom the Desatir makes mention, and of their twelve not less chimerical successors, we find that Zoroaster himself often invokes an anterior revelation, "a primary law," as it is called, which was announced by Jemschid "to men of the earliest age:" and these words seem to confirm what the Greeks teach us of a first Zoroaster who lived several thousands of years before the war of Troy. But as we know nothing certain of these primitive traditions, and as they were superseded by books evidently forged, we are obliged to keep ourselves to the Zend-Avesta, or at least to various parts of

that book which are still extant, and which Anquetil Duperron brought back from Guzerat just a century ago.

The Zend-Avesta, that is to say the word of life (according to Anquetil Duperron, and according to Burnouf, the word of fire), is the name of the religious code brought by Zoroaster about the year 549 B.C., and which he feigned to have received from God Himself by revelation. It contains, like Menou's Codes and nearly all books of that sort, a metaphysics and a cosmogony closely mixed with a system of ethics, politics, civil legislation and liturgy. The persecutions which were pending for several centuries on the unfortunate descendants of the ancient Persians, known this day by the name of Parsis or Guebres, did not allow them to preserve the complete work, but what time has spared of it forms its largest portion and gives us a sufficient idea of the whole. I will add that after Anquetil Duperron's translation and dissertations, checked and partly completed by the researches of Burnouf, and by the learned observations of a

Persian traveller of the 17th century, it is impossible for us to doubt the meaning and the authenticity of that monument. The doctrine which it presents to us was once really professed by one of the vastest and most populous empires which existed on the earth, by a nation who could set on foot more than a million soldiers, and counted more than ten million lives.

None are ignorant that one of the fundamental dogmas of the Zend-Avesta is that which recognises two principles reigning over the universe: Ormuzd, the author of good, and Ahriman the author of evil. But this dualism is only admitted for a time and in a determined degree, for the purpose of removing from God the responsibility of evil; it is not the crowning word of Zoroaster's creed. The ground-work of this creed, as I will easily demonstrate it, is Monotheism. At first Ormuzd and Ahriman are both sprung from a higher principle. They are represented as "a single being," in Zervané-Akérémé or the Eternal. The Zend-Avesta does not explain more of the nature and attributes of this first being. Was it

then taken in various senses by the diffierent sects of Magianism? Some saw in it only the abstract time or eternity, some space, and others, forming the sect of Zervanites, the primitive light; but the very remnants of the original books authorise us to believe that it refers to the infinite Being, who is superior to all distinctions of good and evil and who defies all definition.

It will moreover be observed that there is no equality between Ormuzd and Ahriman. If we trust several sects, Ahriman received existence after Ormuzd, and therefore he must not be eternal. He accompanied the creation, that is to say, the development of divine puissance, as shadow accompanies light, and ought only to be considered as a negation, as the limit to, or the inseparable imperfection of, perfected beings. But without departing from the text of the Zend-Avesta, we see that Ormuzd, "the most wise king (Ahurâ-Muzdaô,)" truly possesses the attributes of divinity. He alone is invoked and adored in Zoroaster's religion, which is called by its own name, the Mazdeisme. These are the

terms in which it is commanded to pray to Him. "I invoke and I celebrate Ahurâ-Muzdaô, the glorious and resplendent creator, greatest and best, most perfect and most energetic, most intelligent and most beautiful, eminent in purity, possessor of true knowledge, source of pleasures, He who created us, who formed us, who nourished us, He, the most finished of intelligent beings." Ahriman, on the contrary, the spirit of evil, the king of darkness, has only a limited and temporary power, who is much less like an author of the creation than a fallen angel, a creature who revolted against God and is destined to be reconciled with Him. In fact, the duration of nature is divided into four periods of three thousand years each. In the first, Ormuzd reigns alone, as He commenced the work of the creation. In the second, wherein we are living, Ormuzd and Ahriman struggle together with almost equal advantages, one reigning over light, the other over darkness; one displaying all his puissance for good, the other for evil. In the third, the victory belongs to Ahriman; he and the beings who

have erred by his tricks, the demons and the infernal powers, obtain possession of the world and precipitate it towards dissolution. Finally, Ormuzd is again supreme, and shall be so for ever; the dead, purified of their faults, are revived; evil disappears, and with it disappears hell. Ahriman himself, reciting prayers and offering sacrifices, is a zealous servant of the king of light. "He who is unjust and impure," says the Yasna, "who only knows of evil, will say the Avesta on the resurrection-day; acting up to the law, he will even establish it in the abodes of the *darvands* (*i.e.* the accursed)." It is impossible to say more clearly that the power of Ahriman is only temporary and relative. It simply intervenes in the present state of the world, in order to explain thereby its imperfections and discharge the divine responsibility from it. Before this world was formed, it had no existence; and when it shall have disappeared to make room for a better world, it shall no longer exist; for the principle of evil loses its existence if it is joined or made subordinate to the principle of good.

To destroy the necessity of evil is to pay homage to liberty, to justice, to the goodness of God, and to prepare the place for Right in men's society. I would not however, affirm that the idea of divine liberty was pushed by Zoroaster as far as the creation *ex nihilo*, as it is understood by the Christians and the Jews. I rather believe that it has taken a sort of middle way between creation and emanation, by representing to us the world as a voluntary expansion of the substance of Ormuzd. It teaches indeed that Ormuzd *gave* the heavens and the earth; but it does not say that he brought them out of nothing. And how assign to it such an idea when we find that Ormuzd himself "was given" by the Eternal or the ineffable being, Zervané-Akérené? Ormuzd cannot be a creature, He who has always been and shall always be, He, the first author and supporter, He who shall be in the fullness of time the regenerator of the world; He, in short, who owns every moral and active attribute of the divine. It is then impossible that He can be anything else than an expansion, or, if we choose, an eternal manifestation

of the infinite state. Similarly in His turn He produced the universe, but with this difference, that the universe, having had a beginning, being produced in time, being the manifestation of divine activity and intelligence, is a voluntary expansion, whilst those attributes which are personified in Ormuzd, exist necessarily and through all eternity. The presence of God in the works of nature can alone explain to us why Ormuzd has his symbols of fire, light and the sun, or why He is called the great light, the primitive light. The meaning of these signs is perfectly expressed in His own words, brought down in His name by the prophet of Iran: "Teach every man that every bright and luminous object is the glory of my proper light. Nothing in the world is superior to light out of which I created Paradise, the angels and all things whatever that are lovely; whereas hell is a production of darkness." The following passage from the Zend-Avesta is, if possible, still more explicit, as it describes Ormuzd to be the body of bodies or the substance of all beings: "I invoke thee, I celebrate thee, body of bodies, Ormuzd, the highest light."

A sort of mythologic Platonism, if I am permitted to say so, goes to combine itself with this doctrine and to impress on it an eminently spiritualistic character. Light, which served to form the world and which constitutes all its splendour, is nothing but the very reason of God, His word, His verb, the holy Honover, as it is called. Honover is as ancient as God; it existed before every thing, before the heavens and the earth, before man, before even the angels. Being Ormuzd's faithful image, it is in some way His reflex form on nature; it contains in itself the perfections, the eternal types, the invariable models of all objects. These types have a name: in Plato's philosophy they are called Ideas, in Zoroaster's religion, Férouërs. Excepting Ahriman, who is the sole evil or the personified negation, and excepting the infinite Being who defies every form of intelligence, whatever exists has its Férouër: the material and immaterial beings, the soul and body, man and animal, nations, cities, provinces, as well as individuals. But, as I have said, this anticipated Platonism yet shows itself only under

a veil of mythology. Férouërs are represented to us as real beings, sent by Ormuzd from the heavens to the earth, in order to protect it from the power of Ahriman, but who will return one day to the possession of their first estate.

After the models come the workmen; so after the Férouërs come the Amschaspands and the Yezds, the angels and the genii, or the superior and the subaltern angels created by Ormuzd, in order to assist him in the act of creation and subsequently in the government of the universe. The intervention of angels instead of the gods of old mythology is a great progress in religious ideas; for it clearly establishes the unity, the omnipotence and the liberty, in a word, the personality of God. The deities of mythology are more or less independent of the supreme God; they have each their domains in which they seem inviolable and form a species of feudal monarchy, the powers of which, being badly defined and made insubordinate, have always a tendency to anarchy or revolt. The angels of the Zend-Avesta, quite on the contrary, freely created by

the will of Ormuzd, form a thoroughly regular hierarchy, in which each individual, according to his rank and employment, tends to the general weal—without strength, and indeed without for a moment wishing to forsake his dependence. Above this celestial militia are found the six Amschaspands, the different names of which, according to M. Burnouf's translation, signify goodness, excellent purity, goodness united to power, the humility and submission of heart, fecundity, and immortality. The second rank is given to the Yezds, who are commissioned to preside, some over the different hours of the day, some over the different days of the month or over the twelve months of the year; these over the stars, those over plants and flocks; and some over hamlets and cities. The most powerful of them is Mithra, already known in a more ancient worship, probably with a higher rank, but the Zend-Avesta styles him "the eye of Ormuzd: the protector of the provinces of Iran." It is he, who, after the example of the Egyptian Anubis, is appointed to weigh the actions of men on the

bridge of Tchinevad, that passage as cutting as a razor, which Mahomet has changed into the bridge of Sourate.

In descending from divine nature to the intelligible world, from the intelligible world to the spiritual, we arrive at once to that in which we live, and of which we form a part. The origin of the universe, as it is recounted in the Boun-Déhesch, the most ancient book of the Parsis next to the Zend-Avesta, has the greatest likeness to the story of the Genesis. Ormuzd himself explains it in these terms:—"In forty-five days, I, Ormuzd, aided by the Amschaspands, worked with care and created the heavens. In sixty days, I made water; in seventy-five, the earth; in thirty, the trees; in twenty, the animals; in seventy-five, man." These six epochs of creation, forming in all a year of three hundred and five days, are called the six Gáhambars, and are celebrated with as many feasts bearing the same name.

This cosmogony, at the advent of Mazdeisme, was already very ancient in Persia, since Zoroaster himself traces it back to Jemschid, one of the kings

and prophets of "men of the first age." But the author of the Zend-Avesta, whether he had received it from others, or whether he had invented it from his own mind, added to it the dogma of the unity of mankind. Every human race, according to him, forms only one single family, sprung from the same pair, which in its turn was born of the same man. Kaïomers (such is the name of our first father) was created with the gift of speech, having a body glorious with light and the figure of a young man of fifteen. Ormuzd established him as the first king of the earth, with right to command over animals, and with the mission to combat the *dews* or demons. After a life of thirty years he succumbed to the attacks of Ahriman: but, out of his seed, spread over the earth and heated by the sun, the first couple was born, Meschia and Meschiané, who lived long enough to leave after them an innumerable posterity.

The unity of mankind, as it is taught by Zoroaster, seems to be simply an application of a more general doctrine; for it also accepts a unity of

general doctrine; for it also accepts a unity of origin for animals and even for plants. One single stock given by Ormuzd, produced at first ten thousand species, which in their turn multiplied to one hundred and twenty thousand. This primitive stock is the Hom, the shrub of the mountains, with which the Parsis feed the sacred fire. One single animal, the man-bull, gave birth to all the animals. It perished like Kaïomers, the victim of Ahriman's hatred; but its soul, named Goschouroun, outlived it and became the soul of every animal nature. This doctrine itself, as it is easy to perceive, is closely connected with the poetic idealism which we have just noticed.

Let us now pause to reconcile with the divine origin of man, the miseries, errors, disorders, and crimes which have followed his birth, and which have not ceased to exist in his bosom. This is the affair of Ahriman, who plays the same part in the Zend-Avesta as Satan does in the Genesis. Meschia and Meschiané, seated in the midst of abundance, amidst delights more beautiful than the whole world, and as it were in a celestial paradise,

enjoyed both innocence and happiness, when the king of darkness, hid in a serpent's guise, came to change completely their thoughts and their existence. He at first diverted them from the adoration of the true God, by placing himself in His stead. Then he kindled in their hearts every earthly appetite, and by means of these passions, he gradually attracted them to that life of labour and infirmities which they have transmitted to their descendants. But as they were more deceived than guilty, *Ormuzd successively sent them several prophets, the last and the most accomplished of whom is Zoroaster, the son of Dogdo and Poroschasp. Placed henceforth between truth and lie, between light and darkness, man has the power to make his choice, and is the master of his own destiny.

To all these ideas, it is necessary to add that of the immortality of the soul, which appears in Zoroaster's religion to be purged from all belief in metempsychosis, and has that personal character which alone gives it an empire over our minds and links the future to the present life.

There can be no return of the human soul to animal nature in a system of cosmogony where all existences are so plainly separated from each other, and where man appears to us as the last and the most perfect of God's works. But Zoroaster thought, that the existence of man, prolonged to infinity, ought to have an aim conformable to divine goodness. He admits then the pains of the other life only as a purification, a temporary expiation, at the end of which all shall enjoy eternal happiness. Nor does the author of the Zend-Avesta stop here; he would have evil disappear from the whole nature and the regenerated world present us everywhere the picture of heaven. This revolution will follow nearly two other events announced by the prophet of Iran; the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment. All men who have lived on the earth since the world's commencement will return to life and appear before the tribunal of Ormuzd. The good will be separated from the wicked; and, when they shall have experienced for three days, in body and in soul, the former the joys of Para-

dise, the latter the pains of hell, "all will be united in the same work." Clothed with immortal bodies, relieved from all infirmities, freed from passions, they will enjoy the felicity of angels. Ahriman will offer sacrifices to the Eternal, hell will disappear and Ormuzd, having accomplished his work, will rest in glory.

The consequences of these dogmas on morality and law are easy to perceive. In politics they produced the abolition of castes, not, as in Buddhism, by a sentiment of indifference, but by the reverence and love of human nature. Since all men are descended of the same pair, they are all brethren and subject to the same law. We read in the Vendidad-Sadé, one of the writings which form part of the Zend-Avesta: "I address to thee my prayer, O Hom, who makest the poor equal unto the great." We know, besides, on the testimony of Herodotus, that even before Zoroaster, the class of labourers was honoured in Persia equally with that of warriors. But Zoroaster extended that equality to all classes, by directing that the high-priest himself, the

Destouran-Destour, solely protected by his sanctity and knowledge, may be subjected to the common law, and may undergo, on commission of evil, the consequences of his faults. "He who is without sin, shall correct," says he, "him who has sinned; the Destour shall correct the simple Parsi, and the simple Parsi the Destour." If, according to the spirit and the traditions of his land, he makes the king a representative of God on the earth, the living image of Ormuzd, it is his condition that is taken to be the rule of life; that he shall be holy in thoughts, words, and acts; that he shall be the support of the weak, the terror of the oppressor, the father of the poor, the exemplar and the safety of all. Lest he may show himself untrue to his mission, the high-priest has the right of pronouncing forfeiture on him. "Remove," says the Vendidad-Sadé, "remove the king who is not as ye desire."

If from the constitution of the State we pass to that of the family, we find there a new conquest of right over might: the abolition of polygamy. The husband, according to the maxims

of the Zend-Avesta, is always the head, the absolute king of the domestic hearth; we owe obeisance to him as to God; but one man can only espouse one wife; the pair of Meschia and Meschiané serve as a model to all marriages: and if Herodotus says to the contrary, he should be understood to refer to an epoch prior to Zoroaster's mission. There is however one exception to this rule. He who has espoused a barren wife can espouse another during the life-time of the former. But this fact is due to that "reason of state" which induced the kings of Persia to encourage the increase of population, and to that religious sentiment which represented posterity in the eyes of men as a means of salvation,—a bridge to reach heaven. But it changes nothing in the idea which the legislator of Iran lays down of marriage in general. On every man capable of contracting it, he imposes it as a duty; he admits no other relation between the two sexes and severely proscribes every act of impurity and libertinage, and, still more justly, whatever is either accomplished by aid of force or betrays the conjugal faith.

As to the relations which exist among all men, alike those of family and of country, Zoroaster does not content himself with prohibiting acts generally acknowledged to be criminal, as murder, adultery, theft, violence, perfidy, perjury, and debauchery which outrages nature; he interdicts equally those which shun the pursuits of society and simply violate the conscience; for instance, ingratitude and lying, two vices which the Persians always held in disgrace: he condemns envy, vanity, avarice, anger, pride, presumption, weakness, and every hateful, jealous, and egotistic sentiment. Herodotus relates that it was forbidden in Persia to pray for one's own self; the vows that were addressed to heaven ought really to be of the prosperity of the king and the country. Zoroaster, while preserving that law, gives it a much more elevated meaning; he would have the Destour or the priest who recites the prayer, to be united in thought with the universe of true believers, and with all virtuous souls who lived on the earth from the world's commencement and even those

who will exist in future unto the day of resurrection.

At the same time that he proscribes crimes, passions, and vices which arm us against each other, Zoroaster commands that men be reconciled together by every appropriate virtue: justice, beneficence, liberality, gentleness, pity, and forgiveness of injuries. The justice of the Persians was celebrated in antiquity; it consists, according to their legislator, in abstaining not only from evil actions but also from evil thoughts, in not putting off till to-morrow a good thing which may be done to-day; in never departing from the given word; in recompensing every one according to his works, and in extending this rule to the very animals. Beneficence and liberality, which we just found to be among the sovereign's duties, are not less obligatory to private individuals. These virtues confer on man such a degree of sanctity, that they invoke as a tutelary power the Ferouër of whoever habitually practises them, and who, besides appeasing the hunger of the poor, spreads around them happiness and plenty. On

the contrary it is a crime of which one is accused before God, if one has not received into one's house, when one could help it, and preserved from heat and cold, a foreign traveller. Gentleness and humanity, as in the great king Khosro, ought to accompany courage and the greatness of soul, and belong no less to him who commands than him who obeys. Mercy, like justice, may be exercised towards every creature, beasts as well as men. It is a very great sin, for a faithful disciple of Mazdeïsme to kill, or merely to strike and cause hurt to animals without reason, to refuse them shelter and nourishment according to their wants. In short, in imitation of Ormuzd, who at the end of the world will pardon every sinner, man ought to pardon his fellow-creatures for the wrongs and injuries he has received from them. Zoroaster, coupling practice with precept, goes to preach his law among inimical nations, and prays that those who envy and persecute him may open their eyes to light. He shows us the just men on the day of the last judgment weeping over the wicked as much as the wicked weeping over themselves.

It should, however, be remarked that this clemency is not without its conditions; it exacts at least repentance from the evil-doer and does not gainsay the right of defending one's self against an obstinate enemy. Mazdeisme is not, like Brahmanism and the religion of Buddha, the doctrine of self-abandonment pushed to the annihilation of the soul and body, the confusion of every existence, and the absorption of man into God; it is, quite on the contrary, a re-vindication of human liberty, and inclines more to the side of right than to that of abnegation. It describes to us life as a combat without truce and without rest, in which man, in order to defend himself against an enemy as cunning as he is wicked, is compelled to avail himself of all his faculties. The field of battle is at once his soul and the universe; for whatever is bad comes from Ahriman, the rebel forces of nature as well as the passions of his own heart. Hence it follows that Zoroaster's faith, whilst teaching the most elevated morality, and presenting as the summary of law those three essential rules: "purity of thought, purity of

speech, purity of act," remains notwithstanding far removed from mysticism, and especially from asceticism, so dear to the East. Far from recommending fasting and abstinence, it prohibits them as a sin, because it supposes that, in the struggle which it has to sustain, man has no less need of holiness and of bodily strength than of the energy of soul and the faculties of intelligence. It does not believe that in this world, the soul and body can do away with one another; it styles them "friends," and proposes their union as a model to those which take place amongst men. It exacts from its followers, and promises them all at once, "a living body" in recompense of their fidelity, health, and strength. Among the numerous qualifications which Zoroaster makes in respect of his law, may be observed this one: "The speech which giveth health."

But for the obscurity which ever remains spread over some of its most important principles, for instance the unity of God and the creation of the world; but for the place it has assigned to spiritual terrors by making the parts equal, in the

present state of nature between the God of Heaven and the king of darkness, and by showing man as surrounded all his life by legions of invisible foes; lastly, but for those minute, subduing, and in some sense innumerable practices which under pretext of serving as bulwarks, conceal if they do not stifle it, under a quite material envelope, this noble belief would have exercised a deeper and more wide-spread influence. It was necessary, however, that it should retain a very powerful vitality, a great force, at once of absorption and resistance, in order to perform the career it has run. After conquering, under the sway of the ancient kings of Persia, a large part of Asia, it penetrated to Egypt and Greece through the schools of Alexandria, to Judæa by the Babylonian captivity and the domination of the Seleucides, in the West through Gnosticism, Manicheism, and the sect of Catarrhes; since dethroned by Islamism on the very spot where it had its cradle, it has yet developed itself there, and been in some sense rejuvenated under the fire of persecution; it has produced those doctrines,

half-philosophic and half-religious, which we see set forth in the Debistan and the Desatir, whilst a great number of its followers, refugees in India, have preserved to this day its secular monuments and its original purity.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHIC DOCTRINES OF PERSIA.

§ I.

Preliminary Observations.

Between mythology, whose stories and symbols address only the imagination, and philosophy which appeals to the reason alone, there is an intermediate grade of thought: it is reason clothed in tradition's form; it is a religion which strives to answer every great problem of morality, physics, and metaphysics; and which, received at first on the faith of an immutable authority, ended by modifying itself in a thousand ways, and by producing a thousand opposite sects by the constant work of reflection. Such is the character which the human mind presents to us in most countries of the East, and more particularly in

that which will now be the subject of our attention; for, in India or China whatever may be the empire of dogmas and traditions, it is impossible not to recognise there a very original and a very advanced philosophy. In Persia, on the other hand, philosophic doctrines, though numerous enough, are of an equivocal character and doubtful originality, whilst religious ideas, reaching in a short time a high degree of moral perfection, always retained the first place in the intellect.

§ 2.

The Sources of our Knowledge on Iranian Ideas.

For a long time the religious and metaphysical beliefs of Persia could only be known by the help of a small number of obscure passages, sometimes forged, and more often contradicting Greek and Latin authors. A few lines from the first book of Herodotus, from the *Introduction* of Diogenes Laertius, from the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, the treatise of Plutarch on *Isis and Osiris*, some sparse passages from Pliny the ancient, hardly a few words from Plato, Strabo, Diodorus of Sicily, and the pretended *Oracles of Zoroaster* gathered by Patrizzi—these were almost all the materials which the most attentive erudition got together as bearing on this grave subject, when, at the end of the 17th century, Thomas Hyde, a learned Englishman, well-versed in the knowledge of oriental languages, thought of using the Musulman authorities. Was it not indeed quite just to suppose that the successors or descendants of the ancient

disciples of the Magi, Arabs, Turks or Persians, should still have rediscovered on the spot a few surviving traditions of the old religion, and were called all at once to complete and rectify documents handed down by the Greeks? So, Hyde's book, *Veterum Persarum et Majorum religionis historia*, was a real event in science; and the collateral knowledge of which it bears evidence, the curious researches with which it is replete, rendered this success quite legitimate. He is no busy scholar of eastern religions who can even now dispense with consulting that work. It is, however, far from what one would rightly hope and expect it to be. The author, knowing neither Zend nor Pehlvi, both sacred languages of Persia, and consequently unable to reach the fountain-heads, often left himself to be misled by his guides and mixed his own hypotheses with their errors. Thus, he maintains that the Persians, having received from Sem the worship of the true God, gradually substituted instead the worship of the stars, but Abraham withdrew them from their idolatry and restored them to the faith of their fathers; that

they adored but one God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, and the altars on which they sacrificed to the fire were an imitation of the altar of Jerusalem. The most interesting part of Thomas Hyde's writings, is the translation of *Sad-der*, an abridgment of the ceremonial and practical theology of the Persians, which, written in Pehlvi, was translated into Persian verses by Schah-Mord, son of Malek-Schah, in 1495, and afterwards into Latin by the English theologian. This abridgment contains one hundred precepts, which are considered as so many gateways to enter heaven. Hence, the name of *Sad-der*, which means the *hundred gateways*.

But what are all these indirect documents and these uncertain traditions, before original monuments, before Zoroaster's own books, or those which a faith of at least twenty-two centuries consecrates with its name, and which can be styled the sacred writings of ancient Persia? These precious monuments, a young Frenchman, named Anquetil Duperron, went to search, towards the middle of the last century, in Guzerat

in India, where he knew that the Guebres or Parsis, the Persians who remained true to the old worship of their fathers and were driven out of their country by Musulman persecution, had religiously preserved them. Leaving Paris as a simple soldier on the 7th of November 1755, landing in India on the 10th August 1756, he crossed alone on foot, without money and means, amidst greatest dangers, a space of nearly four hundred leagues, to get from Chandernagore to Pondicherry and from Pondicherry to Surat; studied for several years Zend and Pehlvi from the Destours or Parsi priests, and returned to France on the 4th May 1762, with eighty manuscripts, among which were the original Zend and the Pehlvi translations of the following works: (1) the *Yzeschné*, a collection of prayers and inspirations, which M. Eugène Burnouf published with a translation and commentary, under the title of *Yaçna*; (2) the *Vispered*, in which are enumerated the chief beings of the creation; (3) the *Vendidad*, considered as the foundation of the Mazdéan law. These three books together

form what is called the Vendidad-Sadé; (4) the *Yescht-Sadé*, being diverse compositions and fragments of different epochs; (5) the book *Sirozi* or the *Thirty days*, a sort of liturgic calendar, composed of prayers to be addressed to the genius of each day; (6) the *Boun-Dehesch*, a collection of dogmatic treatises on different points, and divided into thirty-four sections; a sort of theologic encyclopœdia, probably composed in Zend, but extant only in Pehlvi. These are the different writings which Anquetil Duperron published, with an account of his travels and a *Life of Zoroaster* in French, in Paris, under the general title of the *Zend-Avesta*, or *the Word of Life*, or according to M. Burnouf, *the Word of Fire*. It is by this name that the whole code of Zoroaster is designated, or the revealed law of which he was said to be the interpreter; but this code was originally far more considerable. Of the Debistan, a work we will speak of immediately, there were made twenty-one books, styled under the name of *nosks* or *naçkas*. Seven of those books treated of the first principles of things and the origin of

every being; seven were devoted to civil, moral, and religious laws, and the remaining seven to astronomy and medicine. But instead of twenty-one naçkas, there remain at this day no more than fourteen, in a state of preservation more or less complete. We do not know to what degree so learned a division can be made to agree with the letter and spirit of the Zend-Avesta. What is certain is that the works we have just made mention of, are the only ones of that order, or rather of that language, which now exist in India, where they were brought from Persia in 1276 by Destour Ardeschir. Not content with introducing them into Europe and translating them, Anquetil demonstrated their authenticity and developed a taste for them by a train of learned dissertations published in the *Mémoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, and the 3rd volume of the *Mémoires de l'Institut* (Class, History and Literature).

The manuscripts so gloriously conquered by Anquetil Duperron acquired a new value, and threw an unexpected light in the hands of M. Eugène Burnouf. That illustrious orientalist,

having discovered that Zend is only a branch of Sanscrit and the language of the Zend-Avesta that of the Vedas, made use of the latter as an infallible key to the interpretation of the former, and gave a precise meaning to whatever had no meaning in his predecessor's opinion. By means of this philological result, he was led to a philosophic one, which is met with more than once in the history of the human mind. He ascertained that the ideas expressed in those religious monuments present the same relation of filiation between them as the two languages; that is to say, that Mazdeisme or Zoroaster's creed, may be considered as a transfiguration or a spiritual metamorphosis of Brahmanic worship. "The Parsis," says he in the work we have just cited, "personified abstractions and moral qualities which, at first properly significative, have in course of time become mythologic beings." In other words the Indians adore nature, and the Parsis elevate themselves above it.

The Zend books, thanks to the labours of Anquetil and M. Burnouf, are able to give us

an idea of Zoroasters' doctrines. But how! before Zoroaster, who himself often invokes a more ancient revelation, and of which Herodotus seems to have ignored the existence whilst speaking of the institution of the Magi,—were not the ancient and polished nations of Iran possessed of any traditions? Did they know of no religious teaching which could have prepared them to receive the Mazdéan law? To this question there naturally follows another related to it. How can we suppose that a work like the Zend-Avesta was never the occasion of any other system; that it never produced that diversity of interpretations, those opposite opinions, those ardent sects which we see elsewhere growing out of every similar monument, especially when we think of the political vicissitudes of Persia, and of the different impulses which it had received? On these two problems, the systems which existed in Persia before Zoroaster's creed, and those which sprang out of it or followed its fall, there are two documents to be consulted, both of very curious but unequal value,—the Desatir and the Debistan.

The Desatir, meaning the *Word of the Lord*, or the *Heavenly Book*, is, if we believe its oriental editor, a collection of fifteen books sent from heaven to fifteen prophets, the first of whom is Mah-Abad or the great Abad, and the last is Sasan, being the twelfth of that name. Zoroaster is one of these prophets, occupying the thirteenth place among them in chronologic order. Sasan II. flourished in the time of Khosrou-Parwis, the contemporary of Heraclius, and ended his days nine years before the destruction of the Sassanides by the Arabs. "The language," says M. Silvestre de Sacy, "in which the Desatir is written differs from Zend, Pehlvi, modern Persian, and all other known languages; and it were now quite impossible to understand a single word of it without the literal translation which is made into Persian by Sasan, the twelfth of that name, and which is joined to the original, verse by verse and almost line by line. He is not satisfied with translating the Desatir, he sometimes adds a commentary of his own which displays a subtle and refined metaphysics." It is this work, already

known in part through the author of the Debistan and of which a fragment in Persian saw the light in 1789 in the New Asiatic Miscellanies of Calcutta; it is this work which was published in Bombay in 1818 by Moulla Firouz Ben Kaous, with the ancient Persian version and the commentary of the twelfth Sasan, accompanied with an English translation, as original as the commentary.

It is a very extraordinary fact that such a monument should have been ignored by history; that out of so many noted writers and books which existed before and after Zoroaster, not one is mentioned in sacred or profane antiquity; but this incredulity is completely justified when we know the chronology of the Desatir and the anachronisms which it decorates with the name of predictions. Mah-Abad, the first of the fifteen personages whom it puts successively on the scene, and who gave his name to all the sectarians of the Desatir, is not merely a prophet of Iran, but the first father and legislator of mankind in the cosmologic period to which we belong: for, after

perishing in an universal cataclysm, at the close of the preceding period, our species began with him in the present period. Mah-Abad was succeeded by thirteen apostles and princes of his race, thirteen Abads who, including himself, form the dynasty of the Mah-Abadians. The number of years which mark the duration of that dynasty can be expressed in no language; it is necessary to content ourselves with representing it to the eye by a 6 followed by twenty-three ciphers. Nor is this exact; for each of the days which compose the Mah-Abadian year is one revolution of Saturn, calculated to be of thirty solar years. The dynasty of the Mah-Abadians is followed by that of Dji-Afran, the second prophet of Iran, whose family, already singularly degenerated, reigned only for a million of Mah-Abadian years. The third prophet is Shaï-Kéliv, the founder of a new dynasty, which, being inferior to the preceding, lasts only for one *schamar*, or a space of six millions of years. To the dynasty of the Shaï succeeds that of Yasan, the son of Shaï-Mahboul and Iran's fourth prophet. This dy-

nasty lasts for ninety-nine *Salams*, or nine thousand nine hundred years. Then we enter with Ghilschah or Kaïormers (Cayoumarth, according to M. de Sacy) into a less fabulous epoch.

The historical facts related by the Desatir in the guise of predictions, offer no less a ground for criticism than its imaginary chronology. Thus the first Sasan, who calls himself the son of Darius II. and brother of Alexander, speaks of Manes and his disputes wth Sapor, of Mezdek and even of Mahomet, that is to say, of personages and events posterior to him by six to nine centuries. Sasan V. who is placed in Khosrou-Parwis's reign, and dies nine years before the fall of the Sassanides, makes mention of the conquest of the Arabs, the power of the Turks and the corruption of the Musulman religion: whence it must be inferred, according to M. de Sacy, that the last two books of the Desatir were written in India, or in a country near India, six or seven centuries after the Hegira, and the rest of the work may belong to the 2nd or 3rd century of the same era.

If this supposition were admitted in all its severity, the Desatir would still be a monument of the highest importance in the history of philosophy, a fact elsewhere remarked even by the illustrious orientalist whom we have taken for our guide in this question. "Although that book," says he, "cannot pretend to the high antiquity which it attributes to itself, it cannot be suspected of containing no ancient traditions that may profit a judicious critic, who separates them from more modern ideas which are changed in their features, and which perhaps are due to the mixture of doctrines with ancient traditions."

The Debistan, or the *School of Manners*, is a work of quite another character, but not less valuable to the subject in question. The author, Moshan-Fani, or by whatever other name he calls himself, as philologists are not at one on this point, is a Persian of the sect of Soufis, born in 1615, in Schah-Djehan's reign, who passed most part of his life whilst on his travels through India, in studying, wherever he went, the religious and philosophic sects scattered in that vast country. He learns

all their books, makes himself initiated into their traditions and mysteries, enters into conversation with their most celebrated doctors and compares oral interpretations with written dogmas. Whilst writing down these observations, he composed the Debistan, in which there are found, analysed without art, but with impartiality* and in an affecting, and sometimes profound, manner, those five great religions: of the Magi, the Indians, the Jews, the Christians, the Musulmans, and what the author calls the religion of philosophers, including therein their chief branches. This book was wholly ignored by the *savants* of Europe until it attracted in 1787 the attention of Sir William Jones. In 1809 it was published for the first time in Calcutta in original Persian, and a few of its fragments translated in English appeared in the *Asiatic Researches*. At last, a complete translation of the work, in French and English, accompanied with learned notes, an introduction, and an analytical contents, was published in Paris by Messrs. David Shea and Anthony Troyer, at the expense of the Committee of Oriental Translation of Great

Britain and Ireland. The first volume is wholly devoted to the religious and philosophic sects of Persia, and may be divided into two parts: that which relates to doctrines prior to Zoroaster and to Zoroaster himself, and that which treats of more recent, or at least revived, systems. In the first, the author of the Debistan does nothing more than repeat, without any important difference, the Desatir and the Zend-Avesta: and this concordance shows us how one of the two monuments was well understood in Europe, and what value there should be attached to the other. The second part offers us facts entirely new to this day in learned Europe, and which may reliably be gathered together, when we think of the exactness which our traveller evinces in matters perfectly known to us: for instance when he speaks of the Jews, the Christians and the Indians.

We deemed it necessary to indicate rapidly the materials which science has hitherto amassed for our knowledge of the ideas of Iran, and the three chief sources which must be attained; we now

proceed to set out with whatever may prove interesting in the history of philosophy, starting always with the Zend-Avesta; since it is the fixed point on which should rest, and round which should extend, all our researches; the system of Zoroaster is the highest and the most universal expression of the mind of ancient Persia.

§ 3.

The Age of Zoroaster.

The first question which the Zend-Avesta raises is of its authenticity. Were the Zend books brought from Surat towards the middle of the last century, really inspired, if not written, by Zoroaster? Are they genuine, original works, or merely one of those impostures so frequent in the East, and in which a few ancient traditions are mixed up with inventions of a later imagination? This question is more of philology than philosophic criticism. Now, as we already observed, contemporary philology has solved it in its first sense. By showing that Zend, that tongue scarcely understood by the Destours themselves, is only a derivation, a stray vein of the language of the Vedas, it has at once proved the high antiquity of the writings which it has made known to us, and of the ideas of which it is the interpreter. Such is, moreover, the nature of these ideas, their religious and primitive character, and their conformity with all that we know of the Persian religion

from Greek and Latin authors, that they offer in themselves a sufficient guarantee against the suspicions of criticism.

As to the age of the Zend-Avesta, the precise date of Zoroaster's mission, and the triumph of his doctrines among the people of Iran, it is a more difficult problem to solve; for Persia has no more chronology than India, or if it has one, it is as fabulous as that of the Desatir and as poetic as that of the Schah-Nameh. Here we find ourselves placed between points extremely remote from one another. If we believe modern criticism upon it, that is to say, the conjectures of Anquetil Duperron now generally adopted, Zoroaster, or, to use his Zend name Zéréthoschthrô (the star of gold, the brilliant star) was born at Urmi in Iran, 585 before Christ, and fulfilled his mission in 549. In the same year after converting his country, he set out for Balk, the capital of Bactriana, where he gained to the new faith, at first the king, then the court, then the whole nation, and even one Brahman, Sankára Acharya, or as the Debistan calls him, Djangran-Ghachah, come from India

for the purpose of discussing with him. The king who then reigned at Balk, Gustasp, the father of Isfendiar, is supposed to be the same as Hystaspis, the father of Darius. Having passed at the capital of Bactriana nearly ten years (from 539 to 524 B.C.), the Iranian prophet preached his doctrines in Babylon, and found Pythagoras amongst his disciples. In this period the Greeks place the reign of Cambyses. Finally, returning to Persia after three years' absence, Zoroaster saw his faith publicly professed in Chaldæa, Persia, Mædia and Bactriana, then reunited under Darius's sceptre, and died at the age of seventy-seven years, 512 B.C. Such is the result of Anquetil's suppositions, who, on the whole, is far from simulating inaccuracies, and only advances them with an extreme circumspection. If we consult Greek authors, we find them almost all agree together in placing the founder of the Persian religion at a distance of time which completely destroys our system of chronology. According to Diogenes Laërtius, Hermodorus the Platonist, in his book on

Mathematics, made Zoroaster flourish 5,000 years before the war of Troy. Hermippus, quoted by Pliny the ancient, and to whom is attributed a translation of several works of Zoroaster, expressed the same opinion, which is also found in Plutarch, in the treatise on *Isis and Osiris;* Aristotle, if we believe Diogenes Laërtius and Pliny upon it, was content to place his existence 6,000 years before Plato, or a little less than 6,400 years B.C. Many also thought that the Magi were more ancient than the Egyptian priests, than even the Gymnosophists or the Brahmans of India. We will add to all these quotations that of Justin, or rather of Trogus Pompeius, who makes Zoroaster a king of Bactriana, the creator of the magic art, and who was subdued by Ninus.

Here do we easily recognise an echo of the old traditions of Persia; for, what other authority than an oriental tradition could have given to the Greeks the idea of that fabulous antiquity? What book, monument, or truly historical fact do we find consulted by them? What is there which could make them suppose that the Magi were

more ancient than the priests of Egypt and the Brahmans of India, except it be those mythologic dynasties, those interminable generations of prophets which are treated of in the Desatir? Did they also reasonably suspect, in so far as it was reduced to these vague testimonies, that Zoroaster's name applied less to one man than to all the reformers and religious founders of Iran? If we found Justin make a king of Zoroaster, it certainly follows from what (in the traditions we have cited) those first prophets are represented to us to be, *i.e.* both as earliest sovereigns of the earth, and chiefs of powerful dynasties. On the contrary, Anquetil Duperron's dates marvellously accord with whatever oriental authors themselves relate of the author of the Zend-Avesta. What is really the rank which Zoroaster occupies among the fifteen prophets of the Desatir? He is placed immediately after the mythologic and heroic times of Persia and before those of its decay; then Sasan, the first of the name, who comes after the author of the Zend-Avesta, is believed to have lived in the epoch of Darius Codomanus and

Alexander. Now, the history of ancient Persia does not rise out of darkness, but really commences only under the reigns of Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspis. Is he the same Darius, or his father, who, under the name of Gustasp, plays so great a part in Zoroaster's life? Proper names have little import to us, we are only seeking an epoch; and before that epoch which we have found, there are only strange traditions about Zoroaster; after that, the triumph of his doctrines is already an accomplished fact in the great empire of Darius's successors. Let us observe moreover that the conquest made by Darius of a part of India, explains to us the conversion of the Brahman Djangran-Gachah. In short, that Greek sage who in Babylon aids in the predictions of the new prophet, carries us to the middle of the 6th century B.C.; for that sage can only be Pythagoras, who flourished in the 62nd Olympiad, or 528 B.C., whom St. Clement mentions as Zoroaster's disciple, and who, according to a generally-spread tradition, is believed to have travelled through Egypt and Chaldæa.

§ 4.

Later Schools of Philosophy based on Zoroastrianism.

It is impossible to discuss how a few of the beliefs which we have just set forth spread themselves in the East before Zoroaster. Zoroaster himself continually calls upon a more ancient revelation, that of Heômo or Hom, whom Thomas Hyde supposed to be Abraham. The worship of Gâhambars, or the six epochs of creation is universally attributed to Jemschid, one of the kings of the heroic times of Persia, and whose reign, according to Firdousi's calculus, goes back to the year 3429 B.C. We know also that the distinction of the two principles, with their whole retinue of good and bad angels, was already a consecrated dogma in the religion of the Chaldæans. But when we consider in their *ensemble* the ideas developed in the Zend-Avesta, we easily recognise in them an original and powerful system, directed at once against Sabianism and Brahmanism. To Sabianism, meaning the worship of stars, it opposes

the idea of a spiritual world prior and superior to the natural world, and of a supreme Intelligence, who created and who commands the whole of the celestial troop. To Brahmanism which absorbs all beings into one single Being, and shows us nature divided and turning on itself in an invariable circle, it opposes the distinction between God and the universe, good and evil, soul and body, divine Providence and human liberty, the equality of rights and duties; the struggle being considered as a condition of life, and life itself as a preparation for an immortal felicity. We find these two principles, dethroned but not expelled in Zoroaster's religion, essaying to erect and rejuvenate themselves by the aid of mysticism into the system of the *Sipasians* or the *adorers*. Such is the name of the sectarians who take for the basis of their belief the Desatir and the pretended prophecies of the Abads, affirming that Zoroaster has made no change in the primitive revelation, that he has only translated it into parables and allegories, in order to make it more accessible to the multitude. This allegoric method united

with pretensions to a marvellous antiquity, is one of the characteristic traits of sects formed at an epoch of dissolution and decay. Here are the most important opinions of the Sipasians, as both the Desatir and the Debistan present them.

God is the universal being, the only substance. Unity, identity and eternity are His principal attributes, or at least those only which we could seize upon; for His essence is incomprehensible to us. Whatever exists, partakes of His existence and can never be separated from Him; consequently, the universe had no beginning and ought not to have an end. It is the result, not of a creation, but of an eternal emanation. The first of all beings that sprang from God is named Azad-Bahman. He represents universal intelligence, he resides in the sphere of purest light, and acts as a mediator between the supreme Principle and inferior existences. In his turn, he gives birth to an innumerable hierarchy of angels, genii and spirits, who animate and direct the stars, the elements, the earth, the minerals, vegetables and animals including man. The

whole of nature ought then to be considered as a living, intelligent being, all parts of which are bound with, and re-act on each other, like the organs of our bodies; but this life is universal, and, as we have just remarked, eternal and divided into astronomic periods, of which other systems can give no idea. When a period commences, one of the fixed stars solely governs the universe for a thousand years. At the end of that time, it is associated with another star for the same number of years. Every star down to the last, which is the moon, thus becomes in its turn, and for the same period, associated with that which at first reigned alone. This circle being exhausted, the directing star gives its place to that which was its associate in the beginning, and things go on exactly as before. In this manner, the government of the world successively passes to all the stars, the total number of which represents to us a parallel number of thousands of years which form the reign of each of them. At the close of this succession, the period is finished and another period commences, bringing again with

it all the phenomena and all the beings which existed before. Every one of these revolutions is called a day. Thirty of these days form a month, twelve months a year, a million of these years a *fard*, a million of fards a *vard*, &c. The whole of this chronology reminds us of the *divine* year of the Indians, as the fourteenth Abad makes us think of the fourteenth Menou.

The opinion which *Sipasians* form of the human soul is connected with their general system. They suppose that souls, no less diverse in their nature than bodies, come from different regions of the heavens, some from the sun, some from the fixed stars, others from planets according to the disposition of the bodies receiving them. After an irreproachable life, devoted to the true faith and to good works, they ascend again to the stars and are gradually raised to the ethereal sphere, the sojourn of pure spirits, where they might enjoy in the contemplation of the supreme light, *Minenivanminou*. If on the contrary vice and crime have effaced in them the recollections of their origin, they successively descend to every

form inferior to human nature, of animals, plants, even minerals, and end by being attached to the rough elements. In short, if good and evil balance one another in their career, they are purified by a certain number of migrations and then arrive at the level of happy souls. It is by this faith in metempsychosis that they justify the respect which they share with every inhabitant of Persia for the useful or innocent animals and the war they make against injurious ones. The useful animals were once men, guilty of venial faults. The hurtful animals are dwelt-in by souls of murderers and hardened criminals.

This pantheism, half-astrologic and half-metaphysical, is aptly crowned by a lawless and uncurbed mysticism. As the stars disappear before the sun, so in the same way, say the Sipasians, the soul is annihilated before God, the sun of beings. They think there are four degrees or states of intelligence whereby they arrive at such perfection. The first is God's vision in dream; the second is revelation in the state of waking; the third, ecstasy; the fourth, annihilation into

God, together with the faculty of quitting the body. Here again we easily recognise the Indian doctrine of the *Yoga*, if not of Soufism. The author of the Debistan conversed with several members of that sect; he speaks largely of its last chief, Azar-Kaívan, who, born at Khum in Persia, in 1588 of the Christian era, died at Patna in India in 1673, after passing his whole life in contemplation and the hardest abstinence, and was adored among his own as the continuer and descendant of the Mahabadian dynasty.

Indian mysticism appears to us in a manner not less evident, but more exclusive, in the sect of the *Djemschaspians*, so called from the name of their founder; for they pretend to be disciples of Djemschasp the son of the same king Jemschid to whom is attributed the institution of Gâhambars. It is an origin less remote, but quite as imaginary as that of the *Sipasians*. Those sectarians are also known by the name of *Yekanabinan*, meaning the *prophets of unity*, because God is the only being whose existence they acknowledge. Every thing else, as for instance the heavens, the

angels, stars, souls, elements, animals, vegetables, minerals, in a word the universe, as well material as spiritual, exists only in the divine thought. Here is in a few words what Djemschasp is made to say, setting forth his doctrine to one of his disciples. "Know, O Abtin, that the Omnipotent conceived in idea the first intelligence. The first intelligence in the same manner conceived three things, namely: the second intelligence, the soul of the superior sphere, and the vault of the very heavens. The second intelligence conceived likewise three things: and thus one after another to the elements and their various combinations. It is exactly as when we form an idea of a city with its squares, gardens and inhabitants which have no existence out of our imagination." This is, as we see, idealism, if not in its perfection, at least in all its freedom. The Djemschaspians have developed their system in several works, the most celebrated of which, attributed to Farhang Destour, is entitled *Testament of Jemschid addressed to Abtin.*

The *Samradians*, so called from the word *samrad*, imagination or thought, do not essentially

differ from the preceding sect, but they are divided into several classes which mark so many degrees in idealism, from Berkeley's doctrine to the sceptical results of Kant's system. The first class of Samradians, whose founder, Fartosch, is believed to have flourished in Zohak's reign, *i.e.*, according to Firdousi's calculus, 2729 B.C., only regards this elementary world as an idea or illusion; every thing else, as the skies and simple substances, appears to them to have a real existence. The second class of Samradians, who follow Farschid the son of Fartosch, as their leader, regard the simple substances only as real, and count the heavens and the stars among the illusions. The third class, true to the teachings of Fariradj, the son of Farschid, also abandons the simple substances, such as the heavens and the pure intelligences, and holds as realities only the necessary attributes of God. And finally, a fourth class, composed of the disciples of Faramund, Fariradj's successor, accepts nothing of idealism, not even the divine attributes. God, say they, is anything, and God is only an idea. It is

true enough that these four personages, succeeding from father to son at the head of those four schools, are only a symbolic way of describing the different degrees of idealism, and of the fatal tendency which carries it away to scepticism. Lastly, the author of the Debistan assures us to have met in India, in 1054 of Hegira or 1637 A.D., a certain number of Parsis obstinately attached to this system. They are the Pyrrhonists of the East, and to them is attributed a crowd of adventures which recal the scenes of Molière in the *Mariage forcé*.

From scepticism to atheism, the distance is not great. Thus we read in the Debistan that, towards the middle of Zohak's reign, there lived in Persia a thinker named Schídrang, at once a warrior and a philosopher, who recognised no God other than nature, or, to use his own expressions, its *disposition* and *constitution* (*khoy manisch*); in a word, the power which works on the elements. These elements, ever the same, according to him, alternately pass through every state, in men as in animals, in animals as in

plants, from dissolution to organisation and from organisation to dissolution.

It is also atheism, or a material pantheism which we meet with in the doctrine of the *Paikarians*, so called from their founder Paikar. According to these sectarians, God would be nothing else than fire, whose light produced the stars. But fire is not simply luminous, it is also dry and hot; by these two properties, it created air; there is a principle of humidity in the air which produced water. Water being both humid and cold, generated the earth out of its coldness. At last, from the combination of these four elements are sprung all compound bodies. If Persia has its own Heraclitus, it has also its own Thales in the person of Alar, the leader of the Alarians, and its own Anaximenes in Milan, the chief of the Milanians. In fact, the former acknowledged humidity or water as the principle of the universe, and the latter the air. A doctor named Schadib, whom his disciples believe to have lived in Iran at the close of Zohak's reign, imagined the earth to be the generating principle of things

The cold properties of that body produced water; its humid properties, the air; its dryness, fire; and the last, in its turn, generated the sky and the stars. All these materialistic hypotheses, almost identical with those of the Ionian school, come to be summed up and reconciled in Mobed Akhschi's system, the contemporary of Schibad and the founder of the sect of the *Akhschians*. In that philosophy, God is the essence of all elements, and, in this sense, it is true to say that He has no form, that He is everywhere and remains unchangeable, whilst everything changes in the universe. He admits resurrection, but, in a purely physical sense, as the transformation of elements and the periodic revolution of nature. He rejects the rewards and punishments of another life, making the paradise to consist in sensuous pleasures, in the enjoyment of every material good; and the hell to consist in pain and privation. Out of the old beliefs of Iran, he only preserved that law which commands gentleness and forbids cruelty to harmless creatures; but he permits incest and declares adultery innocent when the

husband consents to his own dishonour. Good and bad, says he, have nothing absolute; they are derived exclusively from institutions and laws which man changes at will. The Akhschians may be considered as the Epicureans of Persia. They were very numerous in the times in which the author of the Debistan wrote; but repelled by the other sects of their nation, they generally assumed the mask of Islamism.

We have thus found in Persia, materialism, scepticism and epicureanism, not to speak of systems of a higher order; we also meet there with communism in a sect whose existence cannot be contested; for it was the cause of a political revolution and it displaced a king from his throne. It is the sect of Mazdak, who, having seen for a moment the triumph of his principles in Kobad's reign, was tortured to death by command of Nouschirvan, or Khosroës the Great, about 533 A.D. Mazdak was the high-priest or the arch-Magi of Zoroaster's religion (*Destouran-Destour*); but he ventured to draw strange inferences from the dogmas entrusted to him. To give up one's self

wholly to God, to wean one's self from one's self and the world, is what ought to be, according to him, the end of all our efforts. The more we approach to that end, the happier we are; the more we depart from it, the more we are unhappy. Now, what is it which links us the most to the earth? What is it which prevents us from giving ourselves up to God and living in peace with our fellow-creatures? It is the individual, the exclusive possession of property and of wives, because that possession is the very essence of egotism and is the reverse of abnegation. Wealth and wives should then be put in common. "Wealth and wives," says Mazdak, "ought to belong to all exactly as do fire, water, and the earth's plants. It is a great injustice that the wife of one should be perfectly beautiful whilst that of another be precisely the opposite. It is then ordained, by rules of equity and true religion, to a virtuous man to abandon for a while his amiable companion to a neighbour who has a wicked and ugly wife, and to accept in exchange that ungracious woman. It is equally contrary

to justice and nature for a man to occupy a distinguished rank, whilst another remain poor and destitute of all resources. It is then the duty of a true believer to share his fortune with him who shares his faith. He is even obliged, according to Zoroaster's religion, to send his wife to visit him, in order that he may not be deprived of company." We know that this doctrine, accepted and put to practice by Kobad, raised the whole of Persia against him, caused him to be driven out of the throne, and created disorders which ended only with Khosroës' reign. But in vain did this prince cause the new prophet and his principal disciples to be put to death; the sect survived. The author of the Debistan still found a great number of adepts, who showed him a work of Mazdak, written in old Persian and entitled the *Desnad*. This book, if we believe its own writer, was translated into modern Persian by Ayin Schakib.

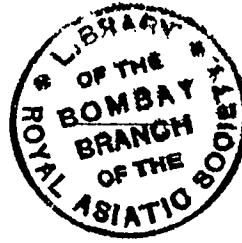
Apart from this political and social system, Mazdeisme also produced several philosophic sects, which at the bottom recognised no other authority

than reason, and interpreted the Zend-Avesta by the allegoric method, conformably to their own opinions. All these sects are reunited under the name of *Beh-Dinan*, or partisans of the true faith, of a better religion. They profess that the war between Ormuzd and Ahriman is nothing else than the struggle between spirit and matter, and, in a more circumscribed sphere, between the soul and the body, in which the superior principle ends triumphant. The demons are passions or appetites born of the body, and the angels the faculties of the mind or the qualities of the soul. Sometimes, too, it is the being and the non-being which are represented to us by the two powers. Good is confounded with the being and evil with the non-being; that is to say, that evil is only a pure negation, and good is the sole possession of a real, absolute and eternal existence. This manner of interpreting the sacred books, in the theological language of Europe, might be called rationalism. It would still remain for us to speak of the Manicheans and Soufis; but these two famous heresies, issuing from the outline which

we have here traced through the ties which connect them, the one to Christianity, the other to Musulman theology, we think it our duty to reserve for a distinct work.

If we now throw a glance at the whole of the surface we have just overrun, we find there are in every slightly-advanced civilization, three periods: the first of pure submission, in which the prophet's inspired voice is only heard; the second of submission and reasoning mixed together, in which the dogmas are discussed, the course of traditions is traced, and various sects are disputing the precedency to themselves; the last or third period of pure reasoning and speculations independent of, and often hostile to, the old faith. During this period, Persia ceased to exist as a moral and political power; attacked both by Musulman and Indian ideas, it had necessarily to pass through their double influence. So there is nothing more contestable, as we said in the beginning, than the antiquity and consequently the originality of its philosophical systems; but its religious doctrines, its mitigated dualism, its

ideas on liberty, the unity of mankind, the world's regeneration, the resurrection of the body, and the future advent of paradise on the earth, are made to excite the gravest meditations, and open a new horizon before our eyes.



CHAPTER III.

The Honover, the Creative Verb of Zoroaster.

Among the various religious beliefs of Asia, there are few which deserve in a higher degree the interest of the historian than the dogma of Zoroaster. It was the old creed of Persia during its splendour, and we should not forget that, the classic people and the Jews excepted, the history of no nation of antiquity has more occupied us from our infancy than that of Cyruses and Dariuses, for the very reason of the relations which it had with the Greeks and the Hebrews. This interest is increased, if to these questions of ancient history be added that of the present; for the Persian religion, though feebly represented by the Parsi populations of Persia and India, is yet the only one of the ancient faiths of Western Asia, which survives to this day, and its disciples, of all the non-monotheistic Orientals, are the

foremost in acknowledging the superiority of European civilization.

I said of all the non-monotheïstic religions. I mean to rise justly against the tendency which would recognise the traits of the worship of one God in the ancient faith of Zoroaster; for I think I can show that the doctrines of the great Bactrian prophet never had that character, though of all the religions of antiquity, Zoroastrianism may be that which approaches most to the belief in a single God. This fact allowed the Parsi thinkers after the times of Neo-Platonism, to remodel themselves on the religions of monotheism, and if the existence of one God is this day announced in Parsi books, this progress is firstly due to the influence of the eastern sects of Christianity, and, afterwards, to Musulman doctrines. If we now read in the beginning of Zend books: *Pa nâm i yazdan, Dâdgar ;* or in Persian *Be nâm-i-ized, Dâdgar: in the name of the true God*, we find nothing else in it than an imitation of the Arabic phrase: *in the name of God, kind and merciful*; and this monotheistic

phrase singularly contrasts with the ideas contained in Zend books, where the same term is again used to denote inferior gods.

But are the contents of the text well known, and especially well understood by the latest disciples of Zoroaster? We know that they say their prayers in Zend without understanding a single word of their invocations. The sacred language is lost, and in many cases we meet with greater difficulties in its reconstruction than those which hamper the interpretation of Assyrian inscriptions. The distinguished Guebres are aware of it, and in 1859 a very intelligent young Parsi came to Paris to study the meaning of the prayers which nobody could explain to him in his own country. The author of these pages, prepared as he was by the works and writings of our lamented master, Eugène Burnouf, was fortunate that he could initiate him into the knowledge of his sacred language. The veil which still shrouds the sense of many of these texts, will only be raised by the application of the principles of comparative philology.

That idiom which is improperly called *Zend* ought to bear the name of *Bactrian.* It belongs to the great Indo-European family, and is the oldest representative of its Iranian branch. It has in its grammar, still less in its lexicon, a great analogy with Perse, the mother of Parsi and modern Persian. Zend is much related to Vedic Sanscrit, and Greek, also to Latin, Lithuanian, and Gothic. By means of Sanscrit, and especially Persian, we check the correctness of the traditional interpretation, *i.e.* that which is furnished to us by the traditions of the Guebres of our days. For, in the times of the Sassanides (226—651 A.D.), who re-established Zoroaster's ancient faith, the Zend books were already translated into Pehlvi, —a mixed language of Aryan and Semitic elements,—and this idiom, now lost, served as the basis of Neriosengh's Sanscrit translations, which permitted Burnouf and his successors to undertake at first an interpretation of Zoroaster's books extant. Burnouf, and the learned professor of Erlangen, M. Spiegel, make it a principle to follow tradition as scrupulously as possible;

another savant, M. Haug, would almost completely abandon that resource which the Parsis themselves offer us. I am more inclined to the opinion of the eminent author of the *Commentary on the Yasna*, for in religious matters it is dangerous to neglect tradition, which is often the only means of propagating ancient ideas; nevertheless there are cases in which science can only accept the data handed down by the Guebres with extreme reserve.

We know that we owe our knowledge of the sacred books of Iran to Anquetil Duperron's courage; he succeeded at the risk of his life to bring back from India those precious manuscripts, and published their translation, the first that ever appeared in an European tongue. This translation was written at the dictation of Parsi priests; it has its errors, I do not hesitate to say so from the outset. And whatever be the errors which I could point out in that first version, I will do so with that independence which one ought to have in order to form one's own judgment of the works of one's predecessors, but also with the respect

due to the deep perception of the difficulties they had to conquer, the talents which they discover, and the good faith with which they conducted their researches. As our knowledge is no doubt yet imperfect, we ought to accept these first data, which have enabled us to exercise our philological sagacity, and these very errors ought to teach us to accord an indulgence, which we shall perhaps be fortunate to claim one day for our own works. Finally nothing was wanting in Anquetil's courage, neither the perils of an unprecedented enterprise, nor the ingratitude of his followers and the calumnies of an envious rivalry.

This apparent ingratitude however has nobly vindicated Anquetil from the attacks of Englishmen, who accused him of fabricating the Zend books; nobody now doubts the authenticity of these texts and the high antiquity ascribed to them. For science has justly cancelled the historical views of those British critics, who with their limited knowledge, were desirous, for the necessity of their thesis, to build the history of ancient Persia on Musulman data; with this view

they accused of ignorance the contemporary Greeks and Jews, whose veracity was so greatly brought to light by the discoveries of the 19th century.

Who then was Zoroaster?

Zoroaster, in Zend *Zarathustra* (splendour of gold), lived at a most remote epoch, we believe about 2300 B.C., in Bactriana, in the times of king Hystaspis (Zend *Vistáçpa*, Perse *Gustasp*). Ancient authors confirm this high antiquity. Pliny places him 1000 years before Moses; Hermippus, who translated his books, 5000 years before the capture of Troy; Eudoxus 6000 years before Plato's death; Xanthus of Lydia 600 before Darius I.; Trogus Pompeius, who consulted the most anthentic sources, makes him a contemporary of Ninus, the first king of Assyria, who, according to that historian, killed the prophet of Bactriana. No author of antiquity places Zoroaster in the times of Darius, son of Hystaspis, as the English do; and Agathias, who directly names this king Hystaspis, expressly says that it is not probable that he may be Darius's father. The last was never a king; moreover the very name of Cyrus,

Kurus, though he reinstituted Zoroaster's faith, is not found in the Zend-Avesta. Hystaspis the king, was the son of Lohrasp (Zend *Aurvadaçpa*), son of Kai Khosrou (Zend *Kava Uçrava*), son of Kai Kaous (Zend *Kava us*), son of Kai-Kobad (Zend *Kava kavâta*), the first Kéanian. Herodotus, who gives a very exact description of the creed of the Persians, mentions no word about the prophet, whom he would certainly not have omitted to mention if the latter had flourished at an epoch so near to his own.

Zoroaster rose then at an epoch even anterior to Moses, and his doctrines did not bear that monotheistic character which subsequently was taken for granted. Nevertheless, his opinions attest his genius, and certainly he was one of the most extraordinary men that ever appeared. His religion was a reaction against the old primitive mythology; and the Vedas, the composition of which already goes so far back, hold it forth to us as one of their most ardent adversaries. It appears in the *Rigveda*, under the name of *Djaradashti*, as an enemy of Indian institutions. It preserved

a few notions about the deities of the Aryas, but they reappeared there in a changed form; thus the Dévas became the evil genii; the *daévas* (*div* in Persian) Indra, Nâsatya, rose as the enemies of the Creator, and as it has long since been remarked, the divinities play an opposite part in Bactriana. The powers of nature, worshipped in the *Vedas*, especially from the point of view of fertility and fecundity, are subjected to two spirits, one of whom is the Creator (*dâtâr*), the other the destroyer (*paurumarka*, lethiferous); the one the holy spirit, (*Çpenta mainyus*), the other the evil spirit (Zend *Anhra mainyus*, Perse *Ahra maniyus*, whence the Ἀρείμανιος of Theopompus) Ahriman. A passage of the Yaçna runs thus:—

Aat tâ mainyú yâ yamaqafnâ açravâtem manahicâ vacahicâ syaothnaecâ hyâ vahyô akemca.

The good spirit named especially *Ahuro Mazdâo* (Perse *Aura mazdâ*, whence Ormuzd), the creating Being, has under his command six beings, *immortal saints* (Zend *amesâo çpentâo*, Perse *amartâ çpantâ*, Amschaspands), who are in Zend language—

1. *Vôhumanô*, the good spirit (Perse *Vahumana*, Persian *Bahman*).

2. *Asôvahistô* the pure-best (Perse *Artavahista*, Persian *Ardibehecht*).

3. *Khsathrô vairyô*, the powerful king (Perse *Khsathravariya*, Persian *Shahriver*).

4. *Çpenta Armâiti*, the holy earth (Perse *Çpantármâti*, Persian *Sapandomad*).

5. *Haurvatât*, the universe (Perse *Haruvatâti*, Persian *Khordad*).

6. *Ameretat*, immortality (Perse *Amertati*, Persian *Amerdad*).

But Ahriman is accompanied with his Seides, the first of whom is *Akômanô*, the evil spirit, and the second *Indra* (Ander), so well-known in Indian mythology. The third, Amschaspand, has his adversary *Çaurva* (Persian *Savel*), in Sanscrit *Çarva*, the name of Siva; and other malificent genii thwart the good which the servants of Ormuzd do to mortals.

Thus is the doctrine of Zoroaster developed in the Zend books. He seemed to bring with him the *Avaçta*, the reform or the re-establishment of

the ancient faith, and the *Zanda*, the law. Thus do I interpret the two words *Avesta* and *Zend*, in which the Orientals meet with the *law* as well as the *commentary*. Another commentary would be the *Pazend*, the liturgic explication, written in the *Parsi* language which is very close to modern Persian. If this word is ancient, it springs from *Upazanda*, the secondary law, precisely as the *Upavédas* are related to the *Védas*.

This *Zend* is composed of 24 *naçkas* or *nosks*, one only of which, the 20th, has come down to our times. This fragment is named in Zend *Vidaevadáta*, the law against the Devs, in Persian *Vendidád*. Some fragments remain of other *nosks*, for instance, of the first *Staotayasti*, praise (*Sctoud-yesht*); of the fifth *Dâmadâta*, the law of creatures, *Dâmâdâd*; and of the 21st *Hadaokhta*, here called (*Hadokht*). These fragments form various collections, one of which, the *Yaçna*, contains in its last part the most ancient pieces, the *Gáthâs* or songs. It is possible that these pieces (commencing with the 28th *hâ* or chapter, and somewhat distinguished

in their very language), may have been composed, as they now stand, by the prophet himself; whilst the rest of the Yaçna, as well as the Vendidad and other parts of the Zoroastrian collection might have been collected by the followers of the reformer at an epoch which it is no longer possible for us to fix with certainty.

Besides the *Vendidad* and the *Yaçna*, there is also found a collection of invocations named *Vispered*, in Zend *Viçparatus*, "all times," because they contain prayers addressed to all the *ratus*. The Vendidad, Yaçna, and Vispered then form the *Vendidad-Sadé*.

Another portion of the fragments of *naçkas* is preserved in the *Yesht-Sadé*, which contains the *Yeshts* or praises of gods; the *Nyayeshs*, which are of the same character; the *Afergans* and the *Patets*, which are species of confessions; and the book *Sirouzi* or the 30 days of the month. Then we read in the beginning of this collection several complete prayers which are found cited by their initial words in the whole Zend-Avesta; this is especially the prayer called *Honover* by the Parsis,

or the *creative Verb* of Zoroaster, containing 21 words assimilated to the 21 nosks of his doctrine. We will endeavour to explain, for the first time this Verb, which to our knowledge has never been translated, and which presents serious difficulties, although it has quite a peculiar interest.

Then, the cosmogony of the *Naçkas* was preserved in a *Pehlvi* or *Houzwaresch* book, which dates its origin from a comparatively modern time. It is called the *Boun-Dehesch.*

These books, the *Vendidad-Sadé*, the *Yesht-Sadé*, and the *Boun-Dehesch*, are all that we possess of the 21 Naçkas, which were divided into three parts of seven each, and attributed to Zoroaster. But there are some lists still extant of the 21 books, mentioning their names, the number of *kardéhs* or chapters, and a summary exposition of their contents. Anquetil Duperron translated one of these books, of which M. Mohl has published the Persian text. I do not think it would be necessary, as is done by M. Spiegel, to suspect the tradition regarding this point, more so as the precision with which the greatest details are

given, bears every mark of truth. We have tried to reproduce the Zend names of those words handed down in Arabic letters; and the data, set forth in the small Persian treatise, perfectly agree in value with their Bactrian prototypes.

These are the names transmitted and restored so far as it was possible:—

1. *Setoudyesht*, Zend *Çtaotayastinaçka*, book of invocations; 33 chapters.

2. *Setoudguer*, Zend *Çtaotagarunaçka*, book of holy songs; 22 chapters.

3. *Vehesht-Manthre*, Zend *Vahistamanthranaçka*, book of the best word; 22 chapters.

4. *Bagh*, Zend *Bagançaka*, book of happiness; 22 chapters, treating of faith and the resurrection.

5. *Duazdeh Hámást*, Zend *Dvadaçahamáçtanaçka*, book of the 12 curses directed against Ahriman, the dêvs and malefactors; they are found, Yaçna cc. 61 and 72; 32 chapters. This book is called *Dâmdad*, Zend *Damdatanaçka*, book of the law of creatures. It treated of the nature of beings and of justice between the good and the bad.

6. *Nader*, Zend *Anâthranaçka*, 35 chapters; especially with astrological contents.

7. *Pâtchim*, Zend *Paçcimicnaçka*, the last book which completed the first series of the Zend Avesta, 22 chapters. It contained, among others, prescriptions on animals permitted or prohibited.

8. *Ratestai*, Zend *Rathaestanaçka*, book of warriors, the second caste of the Aryans; 50 chapters, 10 only of which were rediscovered after Alexander.

9. *Barash*, Zend *Barsanaçka*, book of (?) treating of politics and science; 60 chapters, 12 of which were rediscovered after the Macedonian conquest.

10. *Koussousroub*, Zend *Kavi Uçravanaçka*, book of Kai Khosrou; 60 chapters, 15 of which rediscovered since Alexander; on administration, politics and science.

11. *Vishtâsp*, Zend *Vistaçpanaçka*, book of Gustasp; 60 chapters, of which 11 rediscovered.

12. *Khesath*, Zend *Khsathranaçka*, book of royalty, in six parts and 22 chapters, devoted to the art of governing.

13. *Séfand*, Zend *Çpentanaçka*, holy book, 60 chapters, which narrated the miracles of the prophet's life.

14. *Djarsat*, Zend *Djarastinaçka*, book of . . . . 22 chapters; the last book of the second series; it treats of the predestination of men.

15. *Bagân-Yesht*, Zend *Baganâm yastinaçka*, book of praises of the gods; 17 chapters; treating of angels and their qualities.

16. *Nihadem*, Zend *Nidhatamanaçka*, book of economists, 54 chapters; treating of economy and philosophy.

17. *Usparem*, Zend *Uçiparamanaçka*, book of the highest intelligence, 64 chapters; treating of proofs against temptation and judicial, specially hereditary, tendencies.

18. *Davasroudjid*, Zend *Dvâcraoz'danaçka*, book of two traditions, 65 chapters; treating of justice and injustice, charity, &c.

19. *Ashkarem*, Zend *Asakaremanaçka*, book of true works, 52 chapters; preaching the administration of fair justice.

20. *Vendidad*, Zend *Vidaévadâtanaçka*, book of the antidemoniac law, 22 chapters.

21. *Hadokht*, Zend *Hadaokhtanaçka*, book of the word pronounced in this world, 30 chapters.

These are the data of those Persian lists of *ravaëts*, which are the only ones we possessed, on the numerous works attributed to Zoroaster, and of which we could not, just for the sake of precision in details, suspect the authenticity. The editors of these notices do not seem to have known Zend; notwithstanding this, the information which they supply as regards the contents of the books squares with the meaning of the Zend words restored. It is possible that the Persian texts may be the translation of a Pehlvi catalogue now lost; and it must be remarked that in the case of Vendidad, the *ravaëts* are silent on the chief circumstance which distinguishes the 20th nosk from the others; they do not say that the *Vendidad* may be the *only* nosk that is preserved. They speak of no other collections which the Parsis have made out of the fragments of lost nosks; thus no mention is made of the *Yaçna*, *Vispered*, *Yesht*,

Afergan, *Nyayesh*, *Patet*, and others, which according to the Parsis themselves are fragments of 1st, 2nd, 5th, 11th, 16th, and 21st numbers. Hence, the book of *Yeshts* seems to be the largest portion of the last nosk, just as the *Nyayeshs*, *Patets* and other small writings may have been of the first.

The great bulk of Zoroastrian works is already attested to us by its antiquity, and even if we saw nothing else than an exaggeration in Pliny's datum, that Zoroaster had written some millions of lines, it is none the less true that the collection of the holy books of the ancient Persians took cognisance of every possible variety of subjects. Most of these books seem to have been destroyed by the Arabs; for I see no reason, like M. Haug, to make Alexander and his successors responsible for this literary vandalism. The Parthians, who reigned over Asia for 400 years were zealous propagators of Hellenic civilization, and it was only on the advent of the Sassanides (228 A.D.) that the ancient faith was restored as the religion of the state, by a race which professed to

descend from the Achéménides. We have no authority for not presuming that the Artaxerxes, Sapors, and Khosrous knew more of Zend books than ourselves; for the phil-hellenism of the Arsacides was far less destructive than the zeal of the adherents of the Koran. And when we consider that, in spite of persecutions, Persia during the whole of the middle ages had its *pyrées* (*ateshgâhs*) in numerous places, from which they have since disappeared; we ought not to hesitate in believing that the destruction of Parsi books took place at an epoch comparatively near to our own.

But this large number of books is not enough for the Parsis; the three prophets who will prepare and achieve the conversion of the universe to Mazdeisme, will yet bring with them three other nosks, so that on the day of Ormuzd's victory, the world will count 24 books of the Avesta. For with Zoroaster and his wife *Houo* (Zend *Hvôvi*) there will appear, brought forth by other women, three prophets who will successively reveal the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th nosks. According to the

legend whose trace is found in the Zend books, 99,999 Ferouërs watch over Zoroaster's germ (Yesht Farvardîn cardé 20, *Khsudram Zarathustrahé*), and from this germ will arise in the following order the prophets so named:—

From *Vanhufedhri* (mother of the good) will arise *Ukhsyad-ereta* or *Vahmya* (the growing truth, or the reverend, Persian *Oschder-Bahmi*).

From *Eredadfedhri* (mother of the sublime) will be born *Ukhsyad-eremás* (the growing light, Persian *Oschder-Mah*).

From *Çrutadfedhri* (mother of tradition) or *Viçpatervait* (she who conquers all) will be born *Açtvad-ereta* (the existing truth), named the *Çaosyans* (he who shall save, Persian *Sosiosch*).

Meanwhile, we cannot even boast of the 21 nosks of the Avesta which the ancient Persians knew, and whose number they reckon at three times seven, according to the most sacred prayer of Mazdeisme, the Verb of Zoroaster, which the Parsis name the *Honover*, and which contains

by a *bizarre* coincidence 21 words. This prayer, perhaps anterior to Zoroaster, is several times cited at every page in the three first words, *yatha ahû vairyô*. The Parsis say at this day that the first nosk is called in Pehlvi *Setoudyesht*, but *yathâ* in Zend; the second *Setoudgher* in Pehlvi and *ahû* in Zend, and so on; and we see that they have really forgotten the sense of their most sacred prayer. Nowhere, besides, has the creative Verb of Zoroaster been hitherto rendered in a manner which is satisfactory, and this question is one of the most difficult problems of philology, upon which I have laboured a long while. In these difficult matters the part which grammar plays is very considerable; for before clearing up questions of this philologic order, so humble in appearance, we cannot reasonably think of solving the philosophic part of the problem. I will then ask the reader's pardon for the details which will be necessary for my exposition.

The only version which exists of the 21 words of the *Honover* is that of Anquetil; it runs thus :

"It is the will of Ormuzd that the chief (of the law) do pure and holy works. Bahman giveth (plenty) to him who acteth holily in the world. Establish, O Ormuzd, him as the king who relieveth and nourisheth the poor!"

Such, according to Anquetil, is the sense of the prayer which the Parsis repeat a hundred times in the day, and which they ought to pronounce at every act and every vital function, not excepting once in twelve times. But philology cannot agree with that version in which the Parsis have introduced an idea of charity which does not exist at all in the Verb whereby Ormuzd created the world, and which was, according to the passage we will presently quote, before the existing world. The 19th chapter of the Yaçna, which gives a commentary, divides it into five parts:

1. *Yatha ahu vairyô*
2. *Atha ratus asâd cid haca*
3. *Vanheus dazda mananhô shyaothanâm*
4. *Anheus Mazdai ksathremca Ahurai*
5. *A yim daregubyô dadhat vâçtârem.*

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The meaning of the Verb may be thus explained:

"Like the Verb of the supreme Will, emanation exists only because it proceeds from truth. The creation of what is good in thought or act in the world belongs to Mazda, and the reign is of Ahura, whom the Verb has constituted the destroyer of the wicked."

We see that our translation remarkably differs from that of Anquetil; but before seeking to establish the correctness of our opinion, we may quote a passage from the 19th *hâ* of the Yaçna, which is entirely devoted to the creative Verb. Here are a few principal passages.

"Zoroaster asked of Ahuramazda:

"Ahuramazda, thou most holy spirit, creator of existent worlds, true! what was, O Ahuramazda (tell me), the word which existed before the heavens, the water, the earth, the cow, the tree, fire, the son of Ahuramazda, before veracious man, before the dêvs and carnivorous men, before the whole existent universe, before all the good things created by Mazda, and which has its germ in truth?"

" Then Ahuramazda replied:

" It was the totality of the creative verb (*ahunavairya*), most holy Zoroaster, I tell thee; it existed before the heavens, before water, before the earth, before the cow, before the trees, before fire, the son of Ahuramazda, before veracious man, before the dévs and carnivorous men, before the whole existent universe, before all the goods created by Mazda, and it hath its germ in truth.

" Such is the totality of the creative Verb, O most holy Zoroaster, that when it is even neither pronounced nor recited, but sung, it is worth a hundred other emanated prayers which are neither pronounced nor recited, but sung. On the other side, when it is pronounced, recited, or sung, it is equal to ten other emanated words. And whoso in this existent world, O most holy Zoroaster, remembers the totality of the creative Verb, or utters it when he has remembered it, or sings it when he utters it, or celebrates me when he chants it: I shall lead his soul three times across the bridge of paradise, unto the best

existence, unto the best truth, and unto the best of days.

"And whoso in this existent world, O most holy Zoroaster, spoils in uttering it, the totality of the creative Verb, or its half, or its third, or its fourth or its fifth part: I will leave his soul, far from Paradise, to hover round his body far and wide, as far as the limits of the earth, throughout its length and breadth.

"I pronounced that word which contains the verb and the emanation in order to accomplish the creation of this heaven, before the creation of the waters, the earth, the trees, and the quadruped cow, before the birth of the two-feeted, true man, and before these bodies created in their beautiful forms, according to the wisdom of the Amschaspands.

"I have said in entirety all the holy revelations of the true, the good, of reality, of the present and future."

In many other passages of the *Avesta*, the creative verb is cited as the most powerful means of expelling the *dîvs*; but none of them equal in

importance this portion of the *Yaçna*. Unhappily, these passages only contribute in a rather constrained way, to dissipate the darkness which envelopes the sense of the holy words, and it is only by collating many of them that we succeed in seizing their notion. Even the Sanscrit translation which accompanies, in some manuscripts, the text of the *Yaçna* and a few parts of the *Yesht-sadé*, cannot be very useful to us. We know that portion of it which Burnouf drew from this version for the interpretation of the 1st and the 9th chapter of the *Yaçna*, and we ought only to lament that he was not allowed with all his learning, to submit a larger portion of it to his ingenious and methodical investigation; but he has himself avowed that for the explication of the last part of the *Yaçna* the Sanscrit version is insufficient. In fact, on every real difficulty, Neriosengh's translation, even when the faults of Sanscrit are removed, leaves us completely helpless.

We ought then to depend on ourselves, and all at once the first word puts us in view of the true

interpretation. The word *yathâ*, like the Latin *ut* is an adverb which has its correlative in Sanscrit, Perse and Zend, *atha*, thus, which is the fourth word of the Honover. We have two correlative phrases, *yathâ ahû vairyo* and *athâ ratus asâd cid haçâ;* they are found in the prayer which inaugurates the *Yaçna*, where they form a sort of question and answer uttered between the two officiating priests named *Djoti* and *Raspi* by the present Parsis. This fact was already remarked by Burnouf, who at least is not prejudiced as regards the sense of the *Honover* being different from that of the work he interpreted.

The last words of this phrase do not offer a great difficulty, for in *asâd cid haca: hacâ* (Sanscrit *saca*, Perse *hacâ*, Persian *ez*, Greek ἐχ) is the proposition which indicates separation or origin, and is placed in numerous passages after the ablative (*asâd*) which governs it. The particle *cid* like the Sanscrit *cit*, the Perse *ciy*, and sometimes the Latin *quid*, implies the notion of generality expressed by the word, whatever. The real difficulty resides in the interpretation of the

antithetic nominatives *ahû vairyô* and *ratus*, from which it is necessary to disengage the signification.

The absence of every verbal form equally denotes that the substantive verb ought to be understood.

The word *ahû* itself is an archaic form of *ahuna*, which is often found with *vairya*, and expresses the same idea. The Parsi *Honover* and the form of the Sanscrit version *Ahunavara*, arise even from the modern form, cases of which are often seen in the Zend-Avesta; for instance, the accusative *ahunem vairim*, the genitive *ahunahé vairyéhé*, the instrumental *ahuna vairya*, and even the nominative *ahunô vairyô*.

But what do these important words mean? Etymology alone would be powerless to deduce the meaning of *ahuna* or of *ahû*; for by attending only to the root *as*, to be, and the syllable *una*, we should simply get the conception of what ought to be or is. There is also an affix *ura* and *asura* in Sanscrit, meaning living God, later, bad genii, and *ahura*, in Zend God. For the language

of Brahmans, as we saw, often takes the words in another sense from that of the Iranians. But we have on the other side a Sanscrit word *asû*, which means *evil* word, calumny, whence we form *asûka*, evil-mouthed, calumnious, *asûyana*, *asûyâ*, *asuyu*, calumny. Our Zend word can only signify something audible, for it is often construed with verbs which mean to pronounce and to hear, and the Sanscrit word confirms this opinion. *Ahuna* or *ahû* derived from *as*, to be, signifies *word*, as the Germanic *word* and *wort* are directly related to the Sanscrit root *vrdh* and *vrh*, which, however, means, to believe, and is the origin of the word *vrahma* (later *brahma*), the word, and to the Latin *verbum*. The Parsis translate the word *ahû* by the Sanscrit *svâmin*, master, or properly speaking they confound it with *anhu*, world, which is quite a different word.

The word *vairya*, in the nominative *vairyô*, is the epithet of *ahuna*, verb. This word is derived from the root *vr*. But from which? since there are two. The one means to cover, to defend, and is the origin of Germanic words *wahren*

(Ger.), *garer* (Fr.), *wehr* (English), *guerre* (Fr.), *wart* (Ger.), *garder* (Fr.), and has nothing to do here; the other is *vr*, to choose, to wish; Latin *volo*, German *wollen*; then *wahl*, choice, not to speak of *varius*, capable of choice. It is to this root that Burnouf has already referred the word *vairya*, which he has explained by "he whom one ought to address for obtaining from him the object of one's desires;" by taking the syllable *ya* in the sense of the passive future. I would only attribute to this affix *ya* its other simple sense, which Greek makes ιος and Latin *ius*, and translate it by *wishing*, which expresses will or energy in the philosophic sense of the word. At least the word is elsewhere met with in this acceptation: for instance the name of the Amschaspand *Shahriver Khsathravairya*, the energetic king, *Z'afranâm vairyanam* (Vend. frag. 59), words expressive of the will.

Ahu vairyô then expresses only what after Anquetil has been understood by the name of *Honover*, the creative Verb: and it is rather singular that hitherto there has not yet been attributed

to the antique protoytype the true sense which the translation has preserved in its modern derivative.

The word *ratus* is still more difficult, for all etymology is as impossible *â priori* as the fixing of the word *grandis* for *grad* (gradi), whence it comes notwithstanding. And yet *ratus* is found at every page in all possible cases; and three significations have been given to it, viz. *master*, *time*, and *law*. We would distinguish this last acceptation from the others, and make a separate word of it, having a different genitive; however I do not find conclusive examples. Burnouf proposed different versions; he admitted the translations, of *svamin* mastre, or *sandhyâ*, an epoch of the day, or *çastra*, law. These three meanings could be reduced to a single one. In fact the times of the day, the days, months, years, and periods are named at every page: then we could think of translating *ratu*, truth, by time, if Ormuzd and Zoroaster did not bear, especially in the Vispered and even in the Yaçna, the same title as mountains, fire, and the holy words. Other objects

of veneration among the Parsis, such as the Amschaspands, and the sun, do not generally bear it; for we find it with adjectives in the feminine; this circumstance is not without importance in fixing its signification.

I see in it simply the *effect* of the Verb; the *ahuna* is the creative principle; *ratu* that which flows from it. I do not know of any other possible explanation. Ormuzd is the emanation of truth, because He has created himself.

Thus the compounds of this word are easily understood; the *gathâs* or sacred songs are named *ratukhsathrâ*, the kings of emanation (Yaçna 71, Vend. 17), epithets which they share with Ormuzd himself (Visp. c. 11). The word *ratumat*, endowed with power, is of frequent occurrence; we quote a passage (Visp. c. 18) where it is said:

"We celebrate the Honover, the true, the effect of which is truth. We celebrate him who contains within him the Verb and its effect, the true and the effect of truth; for he who contains the Verb and the effect is Ahuramazda."

A word must be said on the meaning of *true*, which we should give to the Zend term *asa*, which as we know is the sanscrit *rta*, Perse *arta*. It has hitherto been rendered by *pure*, and the Sanscrit version does it by *punya*, pure. But the Sanscrit word *rta*, meaning *good*, *true*, the *asa*, being opposed to the *drug*, the lie, and the idea of truth wanting, without that, in the books of the true Parsis, I do not believe that our opinion could be combated with success.

The sense of the first paragraph is then : "Like the creative verb, the emanation proceeds from truth; which means: since the Verb is truth, the effects of that will can only be true."

The second paragraph including the third and fourth lines will be easier as regards the words, the construction only is embarrassing. We have four genitives: *vanheus* from *vahu*, good; *mananhô* from *manas*, thought; *syaothnanam* from *syaothna*, action in the plural; *anhêus* from *ahu*, world; then two datives *mazdâi* and *ahurâi*, the last of which is separated by the word *khsathremca*, and the reign. There remains the word *dazdâ*,

which occurs between *vanhêus* and *mananhô*, and which can be only a nominative in correlation with *khsathrem*. The absence of the verb compels us to substitute the substantive verb anew.

The only difficult word is *dazdâ*, which I refer to the root *dhâ* to create, also *dadh*, formed with the syllable *dâ*; in fact, we have this formation in many words; *e. g. pazdâ*, *mazdâ*, *azdâ*, *nazdâ*; after *i* and *u*, by a general law the *z* becomes *z'* (j French), *e. g. yaoz'da*, *raoz'dâ*, *mûz'da*, &c. The meaning of this word can only be creation.

As to the genitive, the Parsis joined *vanheus* and *mananhô*, and regarded it as the genitive of *vahu manas*, the name of the Amschaspand Bahman; we do not take it thus, but construe:—

Dazdâ (the creation), *vanheus* of the good, *mananhô* of thought (*i. e.* in thought); *syaothnanam* of acts (*i. e.* in acts); *anhêus*, of the world (*i. e.* that which is produced in the universe); *Mazdâi* belongs to *Mazda*, *khsathremca*, and the reign *Ahurâi* belongs to Ahura.'

We see that there is a dualism in the nature of Ormuzd; the one is Mazda, idea or thought; and the other, Ahura, the material force; the latter only possesses this force through Mazda, the principle of good, personified in the Verb.

By its means He destroyed the representatives of the evil principle: *â yim daregubyo dadhat vâo-târem.* To construe, *yim âdadhat* (it has constituted) *vaçtarem* (the destroyer) *daregubyô* (against the wicked).

The word *vaçtarem* is translated by *âsvâdam âkhadayan* (Yaçna ch. 19), which gives nourishment, but *vaçtarem* is clearly an accusative of the active noun (*târam* in Sanscrit, *torem* in Latin). Moreover, the word, regularly formed from *vâdh*, to strike, to destroy, is often found in this sense, and corresponds to the Sanscrit *vâdhitârem*. The word *daregubhyo*, dative plural of *daregvan* is explained, in this passage by *durbala*, feeble, and in another (Yaçna ch. 10) by *daridra*, poor; but this very word figures in other places, expressed by *durmati*, wicked, and is found in the same text, opposed to *asava*, veracious (*e. g.* Yaçna

ch. 44, 30). We refer it then to the root *drgh*, *drugh*, (*druh* in Sanscrit, *lug* in German), to lie; and in form as in idea, it is identical with the Vedic *druhvan*, opposed to *rtávan*, which is the Zend *asavan*.

We then confidently translate: that it has constituted the destroyer of the wicked or liars, because lying is Ahriman's energy.

This is then the creative Verb of Ormuzd, who created only by means of truth; and this idea is again expressed in the second of the holy prayers, named *Ashem vohú*, and is thus translated by Anquetil:—

"Abundance and the behescht are for the just one, who is pure. He is pure who is holy, who does celestial and pure acts."

The text runs:—

Asem vohû vahistem açti ustâ açti ustâ ahmâi hyad asâi vahistai asem.

Which means:—

"The true is good; better is existence; and existence is a truth for the true and the best."

Thus, as it were, Zoroaster's doctrine might be supposed to approach to that of Euclid of Megara, who said ἀγαθὸν τὸ ἓν.

We will not disdain this grammatical explanation, apparently so humble, since it is the only condition of arriving at the highest thoughts which the wise men of past ages conceived. Perhaps the interpretations we have given will be found to be very abstruse, considering the epoch so remote from the Bactrian philosophy. But an extraordinary man, and such was the founder of this dualism, tries to fathom the nature of things, whatever be the distance which separates him from the force of his contemporaries' conceptions. The mysteries which envelope the creation attract his interest, the moral questions which prevail over the world ask for his solution. And the latter precisely became his stumbling-block. The creation and the powers of nature lead him towards a first cause, which he darkly sees, of which he divines the existence, and admits its eternity and immortal duration. But he also sees evil existing side by side with good, and asks of

himself how the true and the false, darkness and light, can come from the same source? And embarrassed with this apparent contradiction he cut off the difficulty without solving it, by admitting by the side of the source of truth that of error. This step taken, the man who in all Pagan antiquity has of all the founders of religions been the nearest to the belief in one God, relapsed again into polytheism, or rather, as a word now strikes me, into a dualistic pantheism.

And it is remarkable that one of the profoundest philosophers before Socrates, the great Heraclitus of Ephesus, finding himself embarrassed in the same doubts began his speculations in quite a contrary manner, and arrived at the same material principle which became the tomb of Zoroaster's highest aspirations—Fire. Simply taking fire as a sort of *fetiche*, Heraclitus saw in it the incorporeal and ever-mobile being, the principle which reconciles contraries. These opposite notions, Heraclitus did not derive from two diverse sources; on the contrary, he annulled, by identifying them, good and evil, life and death,

sweet and bitter. If Zoroaster was not prepossessed with that moral question which led him to dualism, his tendency would have conducted him quite straight to the sceptical idealism of the Eleatics.

For, unity is just the great point on which Zoroaster stranded. The primitive monotheism of the Persians, which has been talked of from time to time, belongs to the reign of reveries; their civilization did not begin from it, and if it at all could have seized upon this principle, it would not have given it up. This idea seems to us so simple; and it is because it is simple that it could only very gradually do justice to itself. Xenophanes of Colophon said well ἓν το θεῖον, "the divinity is one," yet he became a pantheist: but on the contrary, according to Sextus Empiricus, he even defined nothing (οὐδὲν δι εσαφήνισεν,) and was obliged to choose, for expressing his idea of divinity, a material image, that of a sphere, which, on every side being equal to itself, indicates divinity. The idea of the one only God, whether as a creator of a world which has a beginning or

whether as a Being who is inherent in an eternal world, was foreign to him, as nearly to the whole Pagan antiquity.

So, Zoroaster does not admit divinity in this sense. He knew two eternal principles, of which one created the universe, the other destroys it; the world's eternity, such as, according to Diodorus and Maimonides, was admitted by the Chaldæans, did not suit his thoughts. In order to compare with monotheism the Bactrian doctrine, it came gradually to be imagined that these two principles with their multiple emanations were subordinated to a superior divinity, *Time without bounds*, *Zervané-Akérané*. In the beginning of the middle ages this idea was admitted, and a sect, the Zervanites, propagated it. This day it forms one of the articles of the Parsi faith, notwithstanding that it is not in Zoroaster's doctrines. The Guebres say: "Time has always been; we can neither imagine a commencement nor an end of time; it is then above Ormuzd himself, who cannot exist without it." But Ormuzd is himself eternal and has neither beginning nor end, as

well as Ahriman, his adversary. He sprang from nobody, a quality which the Guebres attribute to infinite Time.

Moreover, in the Zend books Time without bounds nowhere appears as the supreme divinity. In various prayers, the Sirouzi for instance, Time is invoked quite as the inferior deities are, after whom he discovers his own place. In the Vendidad is found this principal passage (Fargard 19):—

"The holy Spirit created; he created *in* Time without bounds." *There* is the principle on which the idea of Parsi monotheism is founded. But let us continue the quotation a little further:—

"Invoke, O Zoroaster, the good law of the adorers of Mazda.

"Invoke, O Zoroaster, the Amschaspands who reign over the earth in seven regions.

"Invoke, O Zoroaster, a moment of that Time without bounds, the divine, the self-created out of the bird of elevated shape.

"Invoke, O Zoroaster, the Wind which is strong, created by Mazda, the holy and fortunate daughter of Ahuramazda.

" Invoke, O Zoroaster, the Feroüer (*farvasi*) to me, who am Ahuramazda; who is the greatest, the best, the most fortunate, most robust, most intelligent, who is the best-formed of truth, the most elevated, and whose soul is the holy word. Determined by its own will, O Zoroaster, invoke this creation of Ahuramazda."

We see what place Time without bounds here occupies; certainly it is not that of the Supreme Being, and this is the only time that in the Vendidad-Sadé the two words Zervané-Akéréné appear.

In the Sirouzi, Time without bounds is invoked after Ormuzd, the Amschaspands, Mithra, fire, water, the sun, the moon, the stars, the cow, Serosch, Raçan, Arastat, the Feroüers, and it is then said:—

" We adore Time without bounds, Time, of which the extent is self-created."

After Time comes immediately the Wind, so that one sees also from this passage that Time nowhere plays in the Zend-Avesta the part of a supreme deity, and we see in successive order, all the elements created by the divine will of

Ormuzd. Time is not, then, as the Parsis of this day take it and according to the sect of the Zervanites, the supreme deity of Mazdeisme.

Moreover, the most ancient original documents reject the idea of monotheism which the modern followers of Zoroaster have formed. The Persian kings who, however, lived under the influence of the great reform introduced by Cyrus, never worshipped Ormuzd as their only God. Darius says:—

"A great God is Ormuzd, He is the greatest of gods, He created the heavens, He created the earth, He created man, He gave man his superiority, He made king Darius."

The same king calls to his help Ormuzd, and all gods, and dooms his enemies to the execration of "all the gods that exist." Later, the kings Artaxerxes Mnemon, and Artaxerxes Ochus consecrate in their texts the power of Mithra and Anaïtis.

And moreover we find in the sacred texts a very direct index that antiquity did not admit the monotheism of the Mazdéans. The prophet

(Isaiah, chap. xlv.) speaking of Cyrus, who re-established Zoroaster's doctrines, to account for the justice of the dualism in allusions well recognisable, says thus :—

1. "Thus the Lord sayeth to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden. . . .

5. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee and thou hast not known me.

6. That they may know from sun-rise to sun-set that there is none beside me, I am the Eternal, and there is no other.

7. I, who produce light and create darkness, making peace and creating evil; I am God who do all these things.

8. Drop down, O heavens, from above, and may the clouds rain justice, let the earth open, let salvation rise, and at the same time let righteousness itself spring up, I am God who have created it.

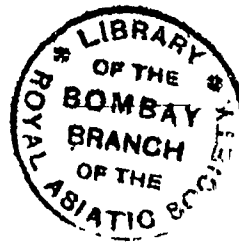
9. Woe unto him who strived with his Creator, he the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to the potter: 'What makest thou, and thy work has not succeeded?'

10. Woe to him who sayeth unto his father: 'What dost thou beget?' and to the woman, 'With what art thou pregnant?'

11. This is what the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, he who created him, sayeth: Ask me of the things to come, concerning my sons, and confide me the work of my hands:

12. For I have made the earth and created man upon it: it is I whose hands extend over the heavens and who command celestial hosts."

And it is in these words of the contemporary sacred writer that we find the appreciation of the non-monotheistic doctrine of the great reformer of Bactriana.



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